

CA24N

XC 13

- S 80

Government of Ontario
Publication

**The Honourable
Vincent G. Kerrio
Minister of Natural Resources**

**Statement to
The Standing Committee
on Resources Development**

Ministry Estimates

1988/89

November 1988



Ontario

Ministry of
Natural
Resources

Vincent G. Kerrio
Minister



Digitized by the Internet Archive
in 2022 with funding from
University of Toronto

<https://archive.org/details/31761114672058>

CA 20N
XC 13
- 580

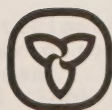
**The Honourable
Vincent G. Kerrio
Minister of Natural Resources**

**Statement to
The Standing Committee
on Resources Development**

Ministry Estimates

1988/89

November 1988



Ontario

Ministry of
Natural
Resources

Vincent G. Kerrio
Minister

I INTRODUCTION

Sharing the Challenge

Mr. Chairman, Members of the Committee. I am honored to present the estimates of the Ministry of Natural Resources for the 1988-89 fiscal year.

If I may begin on a personal note, I would like to say that it is a pleasure to be reporting again on the issues, activities and accomplishments of this ministry. I have held this portfolio for more than three years now, and I must say, at this time, there's nowhere else I'd rather be!

The fundamental goal or purpose of this ministry is to manage the natural resources of this province in the best interests of all the people of Ontario, both now and for future generations.

That is a goal that really strikes a chord with me. I consider the wise use and management of our lands and waters, parks and recreational areas, forests, fish and wildlife to be one of the hallmarks of an enlightened society.

I am convinced the people of Ontario agree with me.

Our natural resources contribute enormously to the environmental, social and economic well-being of this province. We must allocate our resources so that competing uses are accommodated and the resource base is sustained into the future.

I look forward to participating actively in the Ontario round table on environment and economy, which will look at

sustainable development. The round table is headed by my colleague, the chairman of the Management Board of Cabinet. After all, sustainable development is the essence of what we seek to achieve in this province. In the Ministry of Natural Resources, we are at the centre of the debate on sustainable development.

We must develop those resources which provide jobs in industry and the service sector through initiatives such as making the best end use of our marketable timber, upgrading the parks system, and using certain Crown lands for peat extraction, plants that manufacture building materials, small hydro projects to supply power to local communities, and tourism development.

We must renew and enhance those resources that can be renewed. We must protect those resources that are threatened, whether they are an endangered species of plant or wildlife, or a unique natural area. We must also ensure that non-renewable resources, such as aggregates and fuel minerals, aren't wasted.

We must preserve the wilderness areas. Wilderness is part of our natural heritage and must also be part of the heritage that we share with our grandchildren and their children.

There is another thing we have to share, and that is the challenge of managing our resources with balance and vision. I believe one of the best ways of planning for the present and the future is to involve the public. The process of developing new programs or resolving difficult issues depends on strong public

involvement.

After all, these resources belong to all of us. Eighty-seven per cent of Ontario land is owned by the Crown on behalf of the people of Ontario. And ownership brings responsibilities.

This government, my ministry, and I are accountable to the people of Ontario for our stewardship of these resources. We take our responsibilities seriously.

But we expect the public to share the challenge with us. Not only to use Ontario's resources responsibly -- which is something every individual can do. But also to participate in the increasingly open planning processes that are an integral part of developing management plans for parks, fisheries, and timber, and that play such a vital role in the formulation of land use guidelines and a host of other MNR programs and policies.

We also encourage the public to become involved in co-operative management projects through programs such as our Community Fisheries Involvement Program and our Community Wildlife Involvement Program.

Many Ontarians belong to organizations involved in natural resource interests. They belong to conservation groups, community and recreational organizations. At MNR, we actively encourage these groups to work with us to pursue common goals.

We work closely with such groups as the Northern Ontario Tourist Outfitters, the Federation of Ontario Naturalists, the Ontario Forest Industries Association, the

World Wildlife Fund Canada, the Ontario Federation of Anglers and Hunters, Ducks Unlimited Canada, the Ontario Lumber Manufacturers' Association, Wildlife Habitat Canada, the Ontario Fish Producers' Association, the Nature Conservancy of Canada and with native groups. MNR has involved these and many other organizations and individuals in the decision-making for resource management.

We work hard to keep lines of communication open, to build bridges of understanding and co-operation. I think the results in many cases have been impressive, and I will be describing some of them later in my remarks.

This effort to foster partnerships with groups outside the ministry also includes other government ministries and agencies. My ministry works in co-operative alliances with such ministries as Northern Development and Mines; Industry, Trade and Technology; Tourism and Recreation; Environment; Municipal Affairs; and Agriculture and Food.

We also work increasingly with advisory councils and committees appointed to plan and monitor ministry programs, consult with the public and provide advice on issues. Last year, for example, I announced the appointment of members to the Ontario Fisheries Advisory Council. And this year, I appointed the membership of the new Temagami Advisory Council.

Of course, some of the issues we tackle involve controversy. As you can see from the long list of organizations I have just mentioned, the Ministry of Natural Resources deals with a

diversity of interest groups, many of which hold fundamentally different viewpoints regarding the use of natural resources.

Often, the ministry is faced with the job of mediating between conflicting demands to reach a constructive compromise. At the same time we always keep in mind the paramount principle of wise resource use.

An Open Culture

During my time in this office, I have settled on some basic ground rules for how we deal with conflicting demands.

First, be open. The public has a large stake in the management of natural resources, and we have an obligation to ensure they have solid information. This is quite evident in the way the ministry has operated in the past few years, that we increasingly are sharing a great deal of information with the public.

As part of this process of being open, I have brought my staff with me to assist the committee in understanding our programs.

When I talk about sharing information I'm not just talking about news releases on the opening of the parks season. I'm talking about in-depth, important analyses carried out by our own people and by independent experts.

We have released to the public a series of five-year reviews of Forest Management Agreements; the report conducted by Dr. Gordon Baskerville on forest management on Crown lands; the Woodbridge, Reed and Associates

critical study of the forest products industries; and the Temagami Area Working Group report -- to name but a few.

In addition, we requested that our timber management practices be subject to the full scrutiny of the Environmental Assessment Board, and that is taking place at a hearing which is under way in Thunder Bay.

A second basic ground rule is: don't assume MNR has all the answers. Let's learn what we can from authorities outside the ministry.

That's why we have submitted many of our programs and policies to the scrutiny of outside, independent experts. Experts such as Dr. Baskerville, Dean of Forestry at the University of New Brunswick, or Dr. Robert Rosehart, President of Lakehead University in Thunder Bay, who headed a committee evaluating our Forest Resources Inventory. Or to advisory committees such as the group under Dr. E. J. Crossman of the Royal Ontario Museum which is evaluating our fisheries programs.

Third ground rule: listen. There is no use having a philosophy of public involvement if you don't hear what people are saying. Believe me, we do pay attention, and not just to the group that yells the loudest.

Throughout my remarks I will mention examples of how we encourage public involvement and examples of how we work co-operatively with interest groups and stakeholders in the decisions we make on resource management.

And the fourth ground rule: work together. Try to find a

co-operative solution. Let us bring opposing sides to the table, and give them a chance to really understand where the other side is coming from, and try to work out their differences.

Now having said that, I am not going to claim that every issue has been resolved to the satisfaction of absolutely everyone. But I think controversies such as the one over land use in the Temagami area have illustrated for the public just how complicated resource management can be.

I am thinking particularly of the efforts of Dr. John Daniel, in his previous capacity as chairman of the Temagami Area Working Group, to come up with a consensus on some very sensitive land use issues. As you know, Dr. Daniel is now chairman of the eight-member Temagami Advisory Council.

Dr. Daniel led the Working Group through a process which highlighted important issues which we in the ministry wanted to see debated openly before the public. I think as a result of the public debate over Temagami, many more people realize that the issues there don't lend themselves to simple answers.

People in northern Ontario want decisions that affect their jobs, the future of their communities, and their lifestyle, to be tailored to their needs and concerns. They are not anti-environmentalists. Environmental advocates are concerned about the future of our wilderness areas. But they aren't oblivious to the economic benefits of resource development. They too want our forests, wildlife and fisheries well managed.

I will return to the Temagami issue in more detail later in my remarks. But the point I wish to make here is that MNR is making every effort to promote understanding among different groups, and to get the various sides to work creatively with us.

Which brings me to my final ground rule. If we have been open with the public, if we have tested ourselves against the standards of outside experts, if we have listened to all sides and tried to bring them together...then all we can do is make our best judgment. And go out and explain it to the public.

Mr. Chairman, these ground rules are not carved in stone in the Whitney Block, nor are they hung on the walls of all our district offices. They are simply the way we do business at MNR. They are part of what we call the management style or "culture" of the ministry.

We are one of the most decentralized ministries in government, with eight regional offices and 47 district offices in northern and southern Ontario. Our people are part of large and small communities across the province. So if a member of the public wants to get in touch with us, or wants someone from MNR to come out and talk to them, we are never very far away -- whether you live in Dryden or Terrace Bay, Napanee, Aylmer, Ottawa or Toronto.

Our people are only too glad to talk about what the ministry is doing and where and how the public can get involved.

This ministry has come a long way since 1985 when I became Minister -- come a long way

toward greater openness and accountability, better communications and more co-operation with the general public and with the major organizations and other government ministries which have an interest in what we are doing.

There is still more to be done. There is always room to be more accountable.

A Balanced Approach

Mr. Chairman, I have been emphasizing that this must be an outward-looking ministry. It also must be a ministry with a strong sense of purpose -- of where it's going and why.

Much of what we do requires long-term planning -- you don't regenerate a forest or restock a river with a self-sustaining fish population in a month or two, or even a year or two. What we do takes time. Time and careful planning. So it's important to have a clear sense of direction, and some principles to help steer the course.

Our approach is one of balance and integration. It is guided by the principles of conservation and sustainable development.

The basic tenets of conservation are the key to how we manage resources, whether we're talking about forests, wildlife, provincial parks or public lands and waters.

These principles are:

- o biologically sound management;
- o sustainable yield;
- o rehabilitation;
- o and protection.

These tenets provide the

framework within which we must balance the competing demands on Ontario's natural resources. By following these principles, we keep our eyes clearly focused on the future. The wise use of resources today will not only provide benefits for Ontarians in the 1990s, but it will ensure that succeeding generations receive a rich natural inheritance.

I used the words "balance" and "integration" in describing our approach to the wise use of resources. We put our balanced approach into practice through integrated resource management. Integrated resource management means that we look at the whole picture in resource management planning and decision making.

This complex world in which we live is full of inter-related parts. It is so inter-connected that the use of DDT on another continent can mean the extinction of a species of migrating bird to Canada.

Here in Ontario, we have learned that to manage resources intelligently, we must manage them in a way which recognizes all those connections. The wildlife biologist, the fisheries scientist and the forester must work together.

But integrated management goes beyond that. It strikes a balance between a strong and productive resource base which supports a competitive, diversified economy, and a secure natural environment which supports a diversity of plant and animal communities. It supports uses of those natural communities involving both consumption, such as hunting or logging, and non-consumption, such as

viewing wildlife or natural habitat.

What does this mean in practical application? For example in northern Ontario, it means we want to ensure that there is wood at the mill gate so that the plants can keep running and thousands of jobs -- on which the communities depend -- will be maintained.

And in southern Ontario, integrated resource management in forestry means we recognize the substantial contribution of small woodlots and forested areas in terms of income to the landowner and employment opportunities in a host of primary, secondary and tertiary industries.

But it also means -- and I want to emphasize this point -- that we are also concerned that timber management is carried out within the framework of conservation and those four principles I mentioned: biologically sound management; sustainable yield; rehabilitation and protection.

We use this framework so that new forests are regenerated for the future, so that tourism flourishes, so that recreational interests and important fish and wildlife areas are protected.

Misconceptions

Mr. Chairman, I have said that this ministry has a firm sense of its own "mission" vis-a-vis resource management in Ontario. I think, however, that there are some misconceptions among many members of the public about our role. I'd like to set the record straight on what I see as a major misunderstanding.

There seems to be a feeling among some people that MNR's exclusive concern is the economic use of resources, that those economic benefits are only important to northern Ontario.

I'd like to deal with the geographical aspect of that misconception first.

Now, I would be the last one to say that we are not concerned with resource-related economic development in northern Ontario. Of course we are. We moved our forest resources staff to Sault Ste. Marie as part of the government's effort to diversify the economic base of northern Ontario, and because forestry policy making is most appropriately located near our largest forest resource.

Our efforts to maximize economic benefits for northern Ontario tie in closely with government objectives for the region.

For example, when there was a threat of layoffs in the Wawa area, MNR was quick to support plans for a marina development on the Michipicoten River and a new tourism information centre in the town. We are also helping in efforts to attract a private sector investor to build a new pulp and paper mill in the vicinity.

But the assumption that the economic benefits flowing from Ontario's resources only affect the northern part of our province is simply erroneous. The prosperity of our resource industries affects us all.

Just consider the following statistics related to the south of Ontario, that area below the French River which comprises

less than 20 per cent of the land mass of this province:

- o about a quarter of forest production comes from the south, and most of that production is high-quality hardwoods and softwoods;
- o 42,000 jobs in southern Ontario are directly related to forestry; that is about 60 per cent of the jobs created directly by forestry in Ontario;
- o the south has three-quarters of the forest industry establishments -- wood-processing plants and sawmills;
- o 95 per cent of sand and gravel production and all oil and gas production are in the south;
- o a third of big game hunting and more than two-thirds of small game hunting are done in the south;
- o 80 per cent of commercial fishing and 70 per cent of sport fishing are done in the south; and 40 per cent of non-resident fishing is done in the south;
- o more than two-thirds of the pelts harvested in the province are harvested in southern Ontario.
- o and 33 of 38 Conservation Authorities are in southern Ontario. Conservation Authorities in the province have completed 21,000 kilometres of flood plain and fill line mapping along river banks and lake shores valued at \$45-million. They are in charge of water control structures -- dams, reservoirs, channel improvements, diking and

erosion control improvements -- that have a total replacement value of \$1-billion. As members, I'm sure, are aware, Conservation Authorities largely focus their attention on protecting life and property.

An example of one of our resource-based economic initiatives in the south is the agreement between MNR and Domtar Inc. in eastern Ontario. The agreement is providing \$4-million in investment over five years for an intensive forest management program on independently owned private lands. This co-operative program, involving landowners in Ontario's five easternmost counties, will enhance the security of supply for Domtar's Cornwall mill, will benefit individual landowners, and will provide economic stimulus to the whole region.

It should be clear, Mr. Chairman, that our resources are important to the economy and well-being of southern Ontario, as well as northern Ontario.

The other part of the misconception has to do with MNR's role as a resource manager.

The balance between resource protection and resource use is the prime mandate of the ministry. It involves the managing of lands and water to provide a whole range of benefits that the people of Ontario seek from their natural resources.

At the same time that we are involved in economic initiatives, we are also committed to a whole range of measures to protect, enhance, and rehabilitate our resources.

We are conducting sophisticated environmental research into the impact of acid rain on our lakes, rivers and forests, in co-operation with the Ministry of the Environment.

We are working with many government and non-government organizations to upgrade our inventory of wetlands and other Areas of Natural and Scientific Interest.

Areas of Natural and Scientific Interest include lands and waters that contain fine examples of Ontario's natural ecosystems and geological features.

We are continuing to pursue co-operative protection strategies, such as private land stewardship agreements, for provincially significant ANSIs.

We are acquiring the most important ones to secure their protection from development.

We are developing advanced technology in computerized mapping which will make a major contribution to land use and resource planning at the provincial and municipal levels, as well as stimulate a whole new private sector industry.

We are reintroducing species, such as the Atlantic salmon and wild turkey, which have been lost to Ontario, and we are working to improve the chances for survival of several endangered species.

We are enforcing the laws which protect our environment and our resources from people who would abuse them.

We are ensuring that our forests are renewed. Forest

industries must comply with detailed ministry-approved plans for regenerating areas that have been harvested.

We are involved in the latest techniques for growing and nurturing trees to maturity, in state-of-the-art silvicultural research and applications of new technology.

We are expanding our network of parks and continuing to make improvements in a parks system which is a provincial treasure and one of Ontario's major tourist attractions.

I think you get the picture. It is a picture of a ministry that is active on many fronts in the resource area.

A ministry that is committed both to the long-term future of our resource-related industries and the long-term security of our natural environment.

A ministry that is showing leadership.

Mr. Chairman, we are a gifted province when it comes to natural resources. The responsibility for the wise management of those resources rests with all of us. As I mentioned a few moments ago, the Ministry of Natural Resources is committed to a balanced vision. We are committed to resource development and the economic prosperity it brings, and we are committed to environmental protection and the natural heritage it conserves.

Let me start my review of the highlights of my ministry's work by focusing on a new policy announced in 1988 which I think illustrates a balanced approach to resource use and protection.

II ISSUES, PROGRAMS AND POLICIES

New Parks Policy

In May, this government announced its new parks policy. A cornerstone of this policy is that we provide more protection for our parks, especially wilderness and nature reserve parks. The policy also adds new parks to the provincial system.

The parks system will increase by 53 new parks by next May to a total of 270 parks. This represents 6.3-million hectares, which is about six per cent of the total land and water base of this province.

Within the system there are six classes of parks: wilderness, nature reserve, historical, natural environment, waterway and recreation.

By next spring, there will be eight wilderness, 84 nature reserve, 67 natural environment, 76 recreation, four historical, and 31 waterway parks in Ontario's parks system.

The new parks policy we announced governs uses of the six classes of parks in the system. It is a policy that is fair and reasonable.

Broadly speaking, in all classes of parks the new policy prohibits commercial trapping, commercial fishing, mining activity, commercial hydroelectric development and logging, except in Algonquin and Lake Superior parks where logging will be allowed to continue.

Our policy emphasizes the importance of park management

planning and the process of public consultation for developing park management plans.

The principles for park management planning set out the broad range of activities that are appropriate for each classification of park.

Our parks system is designed to offer a variety of outdoor experiences to the public, and to provide protection for our natural and cultural heritage features. There are activities which are suitable for a recreation park, for example, which are not appropriate for a wilderness park.

There will be broad public consultation for developing management plans for our parks. I am committed to this important process because it allows the public and interested parties an opportunity to play a role in developing the pattern of uses and the facilities and services for their parks.

I mentioned that the policy provides more protection for wilderness and nature reserve parks. More than 80 per cent of the land and water in our parks system will be wilderness or nature reserve parks, or wilderness or nature reserve zones within parks when all the new parks are added to the system.

Here are some of the highlights of the new parks policy, and some details on its implementation:

- o Sport fishing will continue to be permitted within all classes of parks, except where fish sanctuaries are established.

- o Commercial fishing and commercial bait fishing, on the other hand, will not be allowed in provincial parks except in lakes that are not wholly contained within provincial park boundaries and in waterway parks where these activities will be permitted until addressed in park management planning.
- o Under the new policy, hunting is not permitted in wilderness and nature reserve parks and is not permitted in wilderness and nature reserve zones in waterway, natural environment, historical and recreation parks.
- o Decisions to allow hunting in waterway, historical, natural environment and recreation parks will be made on an individual park basis during the park management planning process.
- o Tourism operations will not be permitted in nature reserve parks. Where tourism operations exist in wilderness parks, they will be allowed to continue, but they may be relocated subject to the park management plan.

Existing tourism operations in natural environment, waterway, historical and recreation parks may be permitted to remain, subject to park management plans.

In all classes of parks, except nature reserves, decisions on new tourism developments or expansion of existing facilities will be made during park management planning.

I have discussed some of the highlights of the new policy,

staff in our district offices will be able to discuss the details of the new parks policy with the public.

Our reliance on the park management planning process is deliberate. We believe that this process, which involves wide-ranging public consultation and participation, will result in wise management of resources in individual parks.

We believe, for example, that it is only fair for the tourist uses in natural environment, waterway, historical and recreation parks to be evaluated on a case-by-case basis.

In fact, throughout the development of this policy we will strive to be as balanced and fair as possible regarding the use and protection of resources.

Temagami

Earlier in my remarks, I talked briefly about the complex land use decisions in the Temagami area. I'd like to spend a little more time on the subject, to describe the decisions we made and the process we went through to try to balance the issues of economic use and environmental protection of resources.

As I have already noted, a Working Group under Dr. John Daniel, with members representing a variety of interests in the area, reported last March.

Without going into detail on all the various points of view on land and resource use in the area, suffice it to say that in the eyes of those involved, the two major issues were, and are,

jobs and the environment.

Concerns had been expressed that jobs in the local forest industry would be lost if access to mature timber stands at an economic distance from the mill gate were denied. On the other hand, concerns were expressed that a proposal to allow logging in areas to the south of the Lady Evelyn-Smoothwater Provincial Park would destroy one of Ontario's prime wilderness areas.

The report from Dr. Daniel was most useful in helping us formulate the solutions announced in May. The process of public involvement also served to give all the issues a healthy airing in the public forum.

In this case, there were two "goods" in the equation: a piece of precious Ontario wilderness, and the economic base of northern communities. We sought a compromise that would strike the right balance.

I would like to review our solutions and discuss their implications. The first concerns the Lady Evelyn-Smoothwater park. Under our new parks policy, this park will be returned to its true wilderness state.

Although the area was logged in the past, logging has not been allowed since the park was created in 1983. Under the new policy, hunting, trapping and mineral exploration will no longer be permitted. These activities were allowed under the 1983 policy of the previous government to permit non-conforming uses.

In addition, three new waterway parks near the Lady

Evelyn-Smoothwater park will be created by next May. The Obabika River, Solace and Sturgeon River waterway parks will increase the wilderness and recreational area in the vicinity by 26,670 hectares or about 37 per cent.

They will create a circular canoe route linking popular routes in Lady Evelyn-Smoothwater. These parks will offer 225 kilometres of prime canoeing, three ancient Indian pictograph sites, an historic Hudson's Bay post, and excellent fishing opportunities.

However, my intention is that the areas between these new parks will continue to be managed as multiple use Crown land with the necessary access.

Another major initiative involves the closure by 1994 of that section of the Liskeard Lumber road that runs through the Lady Evelyn-Smoothwater park. This deadline is two years earlier than that recommended in the Working Group report. By 1994, timber licences issued to the Liskeard Lumber Company, which uses the road, will be re-allocated to other areas north of the park.

Another part of our strategy for the Temagami area involves the Red Squirrel Road, which at present extends west from the Town of Temagami for 55 kilometres.

My colleague, the Minister of the Environment, accepted MNR's Environmental Assessment for the 15-kilometre extension of the Red Squirrel Road. Twenty-nine conditions were placed on the road, including conditions on road construction techniques to limit the effect on waterways and to protect

fish habitat.

Since then, there have been legal challenges to the road. In addition, the Tema Augama Anishnabai have expressed concerns about timber management and access roads in the area. Discussions are taking place with the band to determine whether its concerns can be met in the context of maintaining a reasonable wood flow from the area to mills in the region.

Another part of our strategy for the Temagami district is to provide model management for recreational, forest, tourism and environmental resources. As I mentioned earlier, I have appointed a citizens' advisory council, chaired by Dr. Daniel, to provide advice on matters raised by the public, interest groups, the provincial government and members of council, relating to land use and resource management in the Temagami area.

This council will provide advice on such resource management activities as increasing forest regeneration, identifying wildlife habitat and historic sites, preparing a master plan for developing recreational opportunities, and promoting the area for recreational and other uses.

The council solicits the views of the public and formally reports to me. The Temagami administrative district of MNR will be expanded to include Dundee, Acadia and part of Ellis Townships to better co-ordinate the management of recreational resources.

A further initiative involves the upgrading of a 63-kilometre stretch of Highway 560 between Gowganda and Shining Tree,

north of Lady Evelyn-Smoothwater park. This road improvement will provide a more reliable route for lumber companies and local communities and help to encourage more tourism in the area.

Mr. Chairman, the best way to characterize our response to the resource management questions in Temagami is balance. We have listened carefully to all sides. We have weighed competing priorities. In the process, we have moved to protect the economic viability of towns like Temagami, while enhancing the special character of the area.

I believe that through model management, and accommodation of the various interests involved, we will maintain the balance in Temagami.

I would like to move on to a related issue. Related because it concerns timber management all across the north, and involves an environmental assessment of MNR's timber management planning and procedures.

Class EA for Timber Management

What emerges from the Class Environmental Assessment for Timber Management on Crown land in Ontario will affect every aspect of timber management carried out on more than a quarter million square kilometres of Crown land classed as productive forest -- that's 30 per cent of all the Crown land in Ontario. As I'm sure you're aware, productive forest is defined as forest which contains commercial timber.

This Class EA is the most extensive examination of its

kind ever carried out in this country. It is a first not just for Ontario, but for Canada.

When this government took office, I made a commitment to open the window on forest management practices in this province -- to put these practices under public review and to encourage a dialogue among all users as to what we, as Ontarians, want from our forests.

The Class Environmental Assessment is just such an opportunity.

I want to emphasize that the ministry welcomes this examination. Back at the end of 1985, when the original undertaking was submitted to the Ministry of the Environment, we asked for a full-scale public hearing because we wanted our timber management planning and operations to be given this public scrutiny and evaluation.

We are learning from the process. While the public hearing got under way in Thunder Bay last spring, the environmental assessment process has already been going on for some years as far as MNR is concerned.

During that time, we have continued to refine our planning and procedures in timber management to make them more sensitive to environmental concerns, and more open to public participation.

We have also been working under strict conditions, particularly regarding public consultation.

We have been working on new and strengthened policies and guidelines, such as the Timber

Management Guidelines for the Protection of Tourism Values, released to the public in 1987. These guidelines were the result of a co-operative effort with the Northern Ontario Tourist Outfitters Association. In addition, we have developed new guidelines on the protection of moose habitat and fish habitat.

To ensure that those who wished to intervene before the Environmental Assessment Board had the resources to do so, MNR and the Ministry of the Environment provided \$300,000 to finance intervenors. A special body set up by the EA Board has handled distribution of those funds.

The process is a massive undertaking. We expect the hearing will last about two years. It is anticipated that about 50 groups and individuals will appear before the board. Hearings will be held in 14 communities, in addition to Thunder Bay: Ear Falls, Dryden, Kenora, Fort Frances, Sioux Lookout, Geraldton, Hearst, Sault Ste. Marie, Espanola, Timmins, New Liskeard, North Bay, Ottawa and Toronto.

We expect that this hearing will help the public to better understand the ministry's role and to better appreciate the science and technology involved in the growing, tending and harvesting of trees.

I come back to my contention that there are a lot of misconceptions about what MNR does. I think many people believe we can regenerate forests just by scattering a few seeds. After all, that is how Mother Nature has done it for centuries.

They are unaware of how much

planning goes into forestry activities -- careful evaluation of the ecology of an area; examination of the types of trees and distance of a site from mills; location of fish and wildlife habitat or recreational areas; preparation of sites; planting of seedlings which have been grown in nurseries from specially selected seeds; encouraging natural regeneration through modified harvesting practices; tending of the young trees until they are free-to-grow; and protection of growing forests from fire and pests.

Because timber management will be debated exhaustively in public before the Environmental Assessment Board, we hope that more people will get to know more about forestry and more about us.

Mr. Chairman, we understand that our practices will be closely scrutinized by some groups during the hearings. We are not afraid of open discussion. As I noted earlier, we welcome suggestions for improvements from independent observers.

And when the EA is completed, MNR, the forest industries and the public will have a much better idea of how the course of timber management should be and will be plotted for many generations to come. It will create greater certainty for all stakeholders because the ground rules will be established and broadly approved.

I should also mention that, in response to our commitment under the Class EA, we are currently in the process of reviewing and updating the Crown Timber Act.

Baskerville Action Plan

I have already mentioned the work of Dr. Gordon Baskerville in reviewing forest management in Ontario. I would like to update members of this committee and the public on the status of our action plan in response to his work.

In my last report on estimates, delivered early in 1987, I described the independent review conducted by Dr. Baskerville into forest management on Crown land in Ontario.

Based on his valuable report, my ministry developed a 16-point action plan to take forest management into the 1990s and beyond.

As of today, most of the action plan has been implemented, a few initiatives are still in progress, and nearly all of those are on schedule to meet target completion dates. I will run down the 16 points one by one, under the five major areas for improvement identified by Dr. Baskerville.

The first area of concern was: the need to ensure that the province is getting the best end use from its timber. This relates to the present use of commercial timber and future supply. We have taken the following actions:

1. The computerized Ontario Wood Supply and Forest Production Model is used to determine possible options for harvesting areas. It has been made available to field offices. Appropriate computer equipment is in place and training of staff in the use of the model is ongoing. MNR's Forest Resources Group monitors the use of this and other wood

supply models used as a regular part of the timber management planning process in the field.

2. A ministry committee was asked to recommend ways to improve the determination of area-volume relationships in Forest Management Units. Among other things the report identified measures which will improve the ability of unit foresters to better develop short and long term plans on forest management agreements.

The committee's report has been received and is being implemented by the Management Planning Section of the Forest Resources Group.

3. In 1984, the ministry initiated a project to determine the status of areas regenerated by seeding or planting in the Northern, North Central and Northwestern regions. As a result of the Baskerville report, this survey was extended to Northeastern and Algonquin regions.

A report on the three northern regions surveyed in the first phase showed that less than one per cent of the area treated is not revegetated, and that the established "new" forest is a diverse one in terms of tree species. About 20 per cent of the area has not yet met stocking or growth standards necessary to immediately return it to the Forest Resources Inventory. These areas will qualify for reintroduction when stocking levels increase naturally.

Honourable members may be interested to know that a summary report on the project in the first three regions was tabled as evidence by MNR before the Environmental Assessment Board as part of the

EA hearing.

Results of the survey in Northeastern and Algonquin Regions have just become available.

4. A task force headed by Arthur Herridge, a private consultant with extensive experience in the resources field, has made a number of recommendations related to the "best end use" of Crown timber. The committee, comprising five industry representatives and one ministry official, suggested ways to improve the distribution of appropriate timber to sawmills, veneer mills, board mills and pulp mills, and recommended increased use of byproducts, such as wood chips, by pulp and paper mills.

The ministry has taken steps to implement the report of the best end use task force. The report was issued last month. Part of northeastern Ontario will be designated as a pilot woodshed area for intensive study and management. Ministry and industry will be working together to develop and implement a long-term plan for wood supply and demand in various types of mills. The resulting plan should have applications for other areas of the province.

The ministry is also developing a new timber production policy, using data which will be supplied by forest companies on current and future raw material needs. In addition, a private consultant will be hired to work with pulp and paper companies to identify problems and possible solutions associated with use of residuals, such as wood chips, sawdust and shavings.

5. At the time of the action plan, we had started with putting information on timber supply and demand for northern Ontario and Algonquin region into a computerized format. The purpose is to ensure improved and more effective wood supply to mills. This computerized system, based on both management plan information and mill licence returns, was operational as of April 1, 1988.

The second area of concern of Dr. Baskerville was: the need to ensure that current silvicultural practices are contributing to the accomplishment of specified management targets, and that the budget for regeneration and tending activities is being spent in a manner that would give the best return on investment. We initiated a number of actions:

6. Management planning requires a knowledge of economic costs and anticipated benefits. Decisions made by a management forester, particularly related to the nature and location of regeneration treatments, must be based on consistent criteria and priorities. MNR's chief forest economist organized a series of training workshops on economic analysis for both ministry and industry foresters in northern and southern Ontario. About 180 foresters attended and developed a better understanding of cost concepts of forestry renewal.

7. There is now a standard requirement in the timber management planning process requiring that all management plans must contain clear and quantifiable objectives. The performance in attaining these objectives must also be measurable to determine the

success of my ministry's management and renewal programs.

8. MNR is reviewing the existing Timber Production Policy, and, as I mentioned, developing a new policy statement by mid-1989. Part of the process for developing a new policy involves a series of background papers to be prepared by the ministry for the benefit of client groups.

9. Last December, I presented to the Legislature the report of consultants Woodbridge, Reed and Associates on the economic condition of Ontario's forest products industries. Dr. Baskerville had recommended we commission such a study.

This independent appraisal concludes that Ontario has the basic resource strength to become a larger force in forest products, especially in pulp and paper, and that we are "well positioned to achieve overall growth as well as capitalize on the trend to higher valued products."

However, there are significant challenges ahead. The consultants recommend that industry modernize aging facilities, make better use of new technology, engage in more aggressive marketing, and introduce innovative product lines. They advocate a more proactive and co-ordinated role for government in promoting investment and growth in the forestry sector.

The Woodbridge, Reed report is valuable for both industry and government in helping us set our priorities for future action.

We are working on the wood supply side to ensure that we

are making the best use of the resources we have and that there will be a secure supply in the 21st century. I have mentioned some of those initiatives as part of this Baskerville Action Plan.

We are also working with industry on the demand side of the equation to meet the challenge of international competition, value-added production, modernization and new technology.

MNR has been working very closely with the new industrial restructuring commissioner, Malcolm Rowan, on ways to revitalize the forest industry in Ontario. As part of his initiative to broaden the forest manufacturers' base, senior staff of my ministry have also been working closely with the ministries of Northern Development and Mines, Industry, Trade and Technology, Energy, Treasury and Environment.

Ontario has a great deal at stake in the forestry sector. In some smaller northern communities, 90 per cent of employment comes from forest industries. To develop a strategy to revitalize this sector, we are also consulting with the Premier's Council.

I will continue to keep the House informed of our plans in this area, and I want honourable members to know that their input is important and appreciated. Before I leave this point, I would like to say a few things about our forest industries.

First of all, they are an important part of the Ontario economy. They support, directly and indirectly, some 150,000 jobs. More than 30 per

cent of all manufacturing employment in northern Ontario is directly related to forestry. In northwestern Ontario more than 75 per cent of all those employed in manufacturing owe their jobs to forestry.

The value of Ontario's shipments of forest products is about \$10-billion annually, with the value added to those shipments amounting to about \$4.2-billion. Ontario exports about 80 per cent of its pulp and 75 per cent of its newsprint, primarily to the United States.

Ontario's forest industries have demonstrated, through the Forest Management Agreement program, their long-term commitment to doing business in Ontario.

In addition, over the past seven years, the pulp and paper, wood products and forest industries have invested over \$3.5-billion in capital expenditures to upgrade facilities -- nearly \$1.5-billion of this under the pulp and paper modernization program. That investment has been of significant benefit to northern Ontario.

This is a sector of our economy which makes a major contribution to our prosperity. Government and industry must work together to ensure that we meet the challenge of a changing market.

While government and industry do not always agree, our partnership is based on mutual respect. Our positive relationship guarantees that we will continue our dialogue on this and other issues to our mutual benefit.

Now back to the rest of the Baskerville Action Plan...

Concern number three in the Baskerville report was: the need to ensure that other resource values, such as wildlife habitat and a resource base for recreation and tourism, are managed toward measurable and quantifiable objectives. Our actions included our tenth initiative.

10. The ministry contracted with an environmental consulting firm to conduct workshops involving groups with a stake in forest management: tourist operators, anglers and hunters, federal and provincial fisheries researchers and forestry researchers, representatives from the forest industry, staff from the Ministry of the Environment and delegates from universities. Two groups -- the Federation of Ontario Naturalists and the Sierra Club -- were invited but declined to attend.

The purpose of the workshops was to establish linkages between the activities of timber management and their effects on other resources and values. One of the main benefits of this process was; it brought together major interest groups to identify key relationships between forest management activities and non-timber values. In addition, it enabled MNR staff to develop proposals for studying the effects of timber management on other resource values, such as tourism, fisheries, wildlife and outdoor recreation and the effectiveness of guidelines to mitigate any adverse effects.

The fourth concern of Dr. Baskerville related to the need to ensure that the distinction

between managing the resource and administering to the management of the resource is clear, and that the level of accountability and responsibility of the unit forester is clarified. MNR's actions included the following:

In January 1986, a new Timber Management Planning Manual and planning process came into effect. The new planning process ensures that procedures comply with the Environmental Assessment Act and that clearly defined objectives are specified in each plan.

11. We have recognized that constant vigilance is required to maintain prompt and effective communications within the ministry at the district, regional and main office levels and between these offices and staff. It is also recognized that improvement in communications is a responsibility of every staff member.

12. We have established new criteria for the position of unit forester and the levels of authority, responsibility and accountability associated with the job. These criteria are available to the public. Development of the criteria involved extensive consultation with ministry foresters.

13. To ensure that professional foresters working for the ministry and companies involved in Forest Management Agreements have the opportunity to upgrade their skills in timber modelling and forecasting, a set of workshops was given jointly by the staff of the School of Forestry, Lakehead University, and the Faculty of Forestry, University of Toronto, in the spring of this year.

The five-day workshops were attended by 43 foresters, 35 from MNR and eight from industry. We anticipate an even bigger response from industry next year.

These workshops are the first of a series to be given by university staff over the next two or three years.

14. Dr. Baskerville advised that all Forest Management Agreements and Crown Management Units should have the full dedication of a unit forester. This analysis is now complete and individual regions have taken appropriate staffing actions to reflect the intent of this recommendation.

15. The new position of Provincial Forester is being ably filled by Ken Armson. The Provincial Forester is giving renewed emphasis to the importance of the technical, scientific and professional aspects of forestry.

The last major concern identified by the Baskerville report was the need to review the ministry's Forest Resources Inventory or FRI which is used in current forest management planning.

16. A committee, headed by Dr. Robert Rosehart whom I mentioned earlier, has reported on its findings related to the inventory's accuracy and credibility. That report was released in June. The report says our Forest Resources Inventory is "sufficiently accurate when used for the purpose originally intended."

The report also finds "the current conceptual design of the FRI essentially sound."

The committee recommends that the Forest Resources Inventory system be updated to fully meet operational and other needs, such as those of parks, recreation and wildlife managers.

I'm pleased to say my ministry has investigated the suggestions for enhancing FRI and has already adopted eight of 20 recommendations for updating the inventory system.

These include increasing the use of remote sensing, computer software and other technology that is becoming more and more advanced, and working more closely with private forestry companies.

The report also makes several recommendations that call on the ministry to introduce a Natural Resources Information Service.

We are now investigating the feasibility of instituting such a service.

Mr. Chairman, this update on the Baskerville Action Plan indicates that we are committed to making real improvements in forest management in Ontario.

The ministry has recognized that we must work harder and smarter to keep ahead of changing demands, changing environments and changing technology. Instead of trying to defend traditional practices, we have taken a leadership role in creating new approaches. And by taking advantage of independent experts in the process, we have increased our public accountability.

Forest Management Agreements

One of the foundations of our

relationship with industry is the Forest Management Agreement or FMA. The first agreements were signed in 1980, replacing existing timber licensing arrangements.

These 20-year agreements are signed by the Minister of Natural Resources and a private forest company. The company agrees to carry out management planning, including the prescribed activities of harvesting, road-building, site preparation, regeneration, and tending.

The company must prepare a timber management plan and annual work schedules for ministry approval. In addition, a company must submit annual reports and must comply with ground rules which set out the practices for specific sites. The harvest cannot exceed a specified level over a five-year period.

The Minister has controls in place on Forest Management Agreements such that if the harvest is more than 10 per cent under the planned level, the Minister has the option of assessing liquidated damages and assigning the surplus wood elsewhere.

Every five years, the ministry conducts a review to ensure that the obligations under the agreement are being met. If the FMA is being operated according to the contractual obligations, the agreement is extended for another five-year period.

In July 1987, I signed Ontario's 30th Forest Management Agreement. FMAs now cover a total of 177,821 square kilometres or 69 per cent of all land under timber license in the province.

Last May, I tabled in the Legislature the third series of five-year reviews of FMAs. We have now completed five-year reviews on 13 agreements. The results are most encouraging. We have argued that FMAs promote good forest management. These reviews provide the evidence.

The latest reviews of five FMAs produced these results: while harvesting increased by 10 per cent over the previous five-year period, regeneration activities were up 132 per cent, tending increased 173 per cent and site preparation 194 per cent.

While these results are encouraging, there is still room for improvement.

For this latest set of reviews, we did something a little different. Rather than using our own MNR staff, we brought in three outside experts to do the reviews: Al Baxter, a former regional director at MNR; Garnet Bell, formerly vice president, woodlands, of Spruce Falls Power and Paper; and Harold Cummings, professor of fish and wildlife at Lakehead University.

They assessed the commitment of companies to their FMA obligations, reviewed written records and conducted field inspections to assess performance.

In all five cases, the review committee recommended that the FMA be renewed for another five years.

The five FMAs reviewed were: Quebec and Ontario Paper Company Limited in the Nagagami Forest, southwest of Hearst; Pineland Timber Company Limited, in the Pineland

Forest, northeast of Chapleau; Boise Cascade Canada Limited, in the Seine River Forest and the Manitou Forest, northeast of Fort Frances; and Waferboard Corporation Limited, in the Romeo Malette Forest, south of Timmins.

Of the 13 reviews conducted so far, in only one case has the renewal of an agreement been deferred. That occurred in the previous series of reviews, released in 1987.

Extension of the FMA for the Black River Forest, which is controlled by Great West Timber Inc., was deferred pending re-examination of company plans. Great West Timber took over the Black River FMA from another company during the first five years of the agreement. Then, in July of 1986, Great West was purchased by Buchanan Forest Products.

MNR monitored the situation to assure itself that the new owners had planning and forest management well in hand. The Black River Forest FMA has now been renewed for another five years.

At present, another four FMA reviews are being completed and will be available in the near future. These are: Domtar, White River, and FMAs in Timmins, Cochrane and Gardner with Quebec-Ontario Paper Company Ltd.

Forest Management Agreements are a success story in Ontario. They integrate harvesting and regeneration activities to ensure that this valuable resource is renewed. And they provide greater long-term economic security for the forest industries and the communities which depend on them. We expect these

agreements to generate even better results in the years to come.

Our budget estimate for FMAs this year is \$90-million. That was just about the government's total budget for forest management in 1982-83 (it was \$92-million that year). Now we are spending more than double that amount. This year, in addition to the FMA expenditures, we are spending another \$104-million on other forest management activities -- regeneration, tending, stock production and purchase, and so on.

I would like to turn now to an issue of paramount importance, not just to this ministry, and to resource industries in Ontario, but to all Canadians. That is the Canada-U.S. Free Trade Agreement.

The Free Trade Agreement

As all Ontarians are aware, our government opposed the Canada-U.S. Free Trade Agreement.

However, we said that ultimately the people of Canada would decide.

With the results of the federal election November 21, the Free Trade Agreement will be implemented.

At the same time, as provincial politicians, each of us in this legislature has a responsibility to ensure that provincial rights are protected.

In this regard, two issues in the resources field must be addressed in this House.

One of those issues is our water resources.

As members will recall, I have introduced for second reading the Water Transfer Control Act to assert this province's authority over our water resources and to ensure a secure supply of water for Ontarians and Canadians now and in the future.

The Water Transfer Control Act specifically prohibits transferring water from a provincial drainage basin to the United States or any other place outside Canada.

We have said clearly and emphatically in the act that Ontario's precious water resources are not for export outside Canada.

The act is also important because it provides the Ontario government with the power to refuse or approve water transfers within Ontario or to other parts of Canada. As I have said before, we cannot ignore Ontario's domestic responsibility. We must keep our options open regarding transfers within the province and Canada.

We believe that at the moment our control of our water resources is left to the ambiguities of the proposed Free Trade Agreement.

The agreement does not expressly exclude water exports which means there is uncertainty about the security of our water supply. The agreement allows for the possibility of water exports to the United States despite the statements of the Conservative government.

The federal government introduced the Canada Water Preservation Act just before Parliament dissolved but it offered no protection. The act

died on the order paper.

We believe that our precious water resources are too vital to the long-term social, economic and environmental well-being of the people of Ontario to be left unprotected.

This government wants to protect our water resources and we will provide that protection through Ontario legislation.

We are also examining ways to address the issue of resource practices.

We are looking at ways to ensure that we are able to protect a number of existing management practices and procedures in the resources sector.

We want to ensure that there can be no question as to whether these practices and procedures qualify as "existing measures" under the Free Trade Agreement and are, therefore, exempt from the agreement.

Forestry Update

I would now like to provide an update on some other aspects of our forestry work which I have not yet discussed in any detail.

Moving North

As I mentioned a few moments ago, the Forest Resources Group of MNR has relocated to Sault Ste. Marie. This move helps to diversify and stabilize the economy of a fine northern city and the economy of the north. The move provides more job opportunities in the north for young people.

It is part of a wider Ontario government effort to stimulate greater economic

diversification in northern Ontario, to provide more employment opportunities, particularly for young people, and to encourage stable growth.

I am pleased to be able to report that the move was almost two-and-a-half years ahead of schedule. To date, a total of 135 staff positions have been relocated to the Soo. The new office buildings we are constructing will be completed in 1991. In the meantime, we have a very good location in the downtown core of the city and our staff have been welcomed warmly by Soo residents and city council.

The Ontario Tree Improvement and Forest Biomass Institute (OTIFBI) staff will move into its new state-of-the-art laboratories and greenhouses in 1990. That will bring the total of new MNR staff positions that have moved to the Soo to 235.

We expect northern relocation to cost \$5.3-million in this fiscal year.

The Soo is already home for our Aviation and Fire Management Centre which was relocated from Toronto in 1978, and home for one of our 47 district offices. The provincial air fleet has been stationed in the Soo since 1922. In addition, the federal government maintains two forestry operations in the city -- the Great Lakes Forestry Centre of the Canadian Forestry Services, and the Forest Pest Management Institute. Having MNR's forest researchers in the same community will facilitate co-operative projects.

We expect the Soo to become known internationally as a major centre for forestry. When the Ontario Tree

Improvement and Forest Biomass Institute is relocated next to the Great Lakes Forestry Centre, the Soo will be able to boast the largest forest research complex in Canada and one of the three or four largest in the world.

Forest Pests

Over the last three years, MNR has been waging a major aerial spraying campaign against three forest pests -- spruce budworm and jack pine budworm in the north and gypsy moth in eastern Ontario.

Our provincial entomologists report that all three pests are now in a decline as part of the natural cycle, and our spraying program has been significantly reduced. In 1988, 27,000 hectares of forest were sprayed with the biological insecticide Bacillus Thuringiensis or Bt, to protect high-value timber and recreational areas. That compares to 222,000 hectares in 1987.

We remain committed to the aerial spraying program. But the reduction in the need for aerial spraying has meant some cost savings. The spray budget went down about \$6-million this year. This reduction shows up in the forest management activity of the resource products program in the ministry's Estimates.

Many natural factors contributed to the decline of these pests. It must be remembered that forest pests tend to come in cycles. And while they are down at the moment, they are never out. That's why MNR is constantly monitoring the situation, and planning appropriate action. We spray to protect foliage not to eradicate these pests.

Attempting to eradicate pests would be environmentally unsound because insects are part of nature. It would also be prohibitively expensive because infestations can cover millions of hectares. For these reasons we target our spraying programs to specific high-value stands requiring protection during epidemics until the pest population collapses naturally.

I should also mention that, as is always the case, we are using the most up-to-date, scientific technology available for our spraying programs. This lets us achieve the most effective results possible.

Forest Fires

This year was a hot one as far as forest fires are concerned. Like last year, the fire season started early due to extreme conditions.

Last year, our forest fire management staff kept the total area consumed by fire to 75,582 hectares, which is well below the 10-year average of 160,000 hectares.

This year, the forest fire situation was far more serious. There were more than 3,200 fires, the second highest total in Ontario's history. Those fires consumed more than 394,000 hectares, well over double the 10-year average. But the amount of merchantable timber destroyed this year was small, a tribute to our forest firefighting efforts.

Staff have been working on a number of initiatives to reduce the impact and damage resulting from forest fires. These include gearing up earlier in the season, pre-positioning resources to provide a faster

response and initial attack on fires, continuing to provide more organized and more effective sustained attack on fires, and using aerial surveillance to provide better-directed and more intensive fire detection.

One of the worst fires this year was Kenora 14 in early May. At its height, there were 750 people, including fire crews, pilots and support staff, fighting the blaze. We had assistance from Quebec, Manitoba and the Yukon in the form of water bombers and fire crews. Also, native fire crews and support staff from remote northern Ontario communities assisted our firefighting team on Kenora 14 and throughout the fire season.

As a precaution, residents of the Whitedog Indian reserve, northwest of Kenora, were evacuated for a few days, as were about 65 cottagers. Ten cottages were lost in the fire, but hundreds were saved because of the hard work and skill of Ontario's firefighting operation.

We are one of the best equipped jurisdictions to fight forest fires in this country, and we are particularly proud of our fleet of nine Canadian-made CL-215 water bombers. This aircraft is the only one in the world designed specifically for fighting forest fires. Seven of the CL-215s were purchased under a federal-provincial co-operative agreement.

I should perhaps explain at this point the reason that the 1988-89 Estimates show the AFMC budget coming in about \$11-million below last year. This is because we completed our CL-215 purchases last year.

Members will also note that there is an additional \$5-million for 1988-89 under extra fire fighting. However, I should point out that because of the serious fire season this year, we actually had to spend \$57-million for extra fire fighting.

You know, ordinary citizens could do more to fight forest fires than all the equipment and manpower in the world -- simply by not starting them.

Forest fires cost Ontario an average of \$1-billion every year. And 70 per cent of these fires are caused by people. I would like to take this opportunity to ask members of the public who enjoy our forests to be extra careful.

A campfire that is abandoned without being extinguished, a carelessly tossed cigarette butt or discarded match can erupt into a Kenora 14 fire that burns through more than 22,000 hectares in a matter of days.

Our staff are also involved in prevention of forest fires, as well as detection and suppression. We are developing fire prevention education packages for Grades 1 to 12 to emphasize our message that human carelessness is the primary culprit.

While the front line of our firefighting operation remains the on-the-ground fire crew, we are increasingly making use of new computer technology to help us detect fires and mount the best offense against them when they start.

Computer programs are becoming so sophisticated that they can be used to help the fire manager predict what a fire

will do over the course of the next 12 hours, given the location, fuel, topography, weather and other factors influencing the spread of the flames.

Our five regional fire centres, in Timmins, Huntsville, Sudbury, Thunder Bay and Dryden, are linked by a computer communications network to the main office of the Aviation and Fire Management Centre in Sault Ste. Marie.

I mentioned that we received assistance from other provinces and territories during Kenora 14. MNR, in turn, lends equipment and manpower when we can. Ontario was one of the founders of the Canadian Interagency Forest Fire Centre in Winnipeg, which co-ordinates requests for help.

In addition, in April 1988, Premier David Peterson and Michigan Governor James Blanchard signed a document of intent as the first step toward Ontario's membership in the Great Lakes Forest Fire Compact.

The compact was formed by three states bordering Ontario -- Michigan, Minnesota and Wisconsin -- to provide for mutual assistance in forest fire emergencies. The members also share information and programs on fire prevention and control.

Ontario has been sharing information and programs on an informal basis with the states for some time, but the agreement formalizes and strengthens the relationship.

Ontario's outreach goes beyond this continent to the Pacific Rim. MNR's project to develop a model forest fire management

system in northeastern China is in its fourth year and scheduled for completion in 1989.

MNR is the lead agency in this Canadian project, sponsored by the Canadian International Development Agency. Twenty-nine Chinese fire staff have received a total of 636 weeks of training in Canada, including practical instruction provided by ministry fire managers. Canada has also sent 1,000 pieces of equipment to China, including fire detection equipment, radios and computers.

Canadian advisers in China are helping the Chinese to make the system operational and to transfer the technology to the Chinese field staff.

This project is an example of international co-operation at its best, and we are proud to be a part of it.

Forest Research and Technology

My ministry operates four Technology Development Units, known as TDUs, across Ontario. They are located in Timmins, North Bay, Brockville and Thunder Bay.

The basic job of the TDU is to take research in forestry and make it accessible to resource managers in government and industry who are working in the field. The reason we have these units in different areas of Ontario is because there are particular geographic and soil characteristics in different regions of the province which have an impact on forest management.

The Thunder Bay TDU, the newest in Ontario, has assisted industry field managers in

solving problems with field storage of container seedling stock and the proper application of herbicides. The unit has also consolidated hundreds of forestry research documents so that they are available for use by field personnel.

The unit has five technical specialists in resources management on staff. They include a wildlife biologist who concentrates on improving forest management techniques to enhance wildlife habitat.

Other work by our technology development units includes investigating improved methods of growing hybrid poplar, natural regeneration, growth and yield studies and tree improvement.

A good deal of the research which is applied by these development units comes from an active research arm of MNR -- our Ontario Tree Improvement and Forest Biomass Institute -- known in MNR as OTIFBI. As I mentioned earlier, the institute will be moving to new ultra-modern research facilities in Sault Ste. Marie in 1990.

Many of the breakthroughs developed by MNR researchers over the years have become part of everyday forest management across Ontario. OTIFBI scientists have developed improvements in the handling of nursery stock for the province's reforestation program, for example.

Our scientists are also involved in genetic research, and four of them have been working within the Plant Biotechnology Centre at the University of Guelph since September. In May of this

year, MNR delivered a cheque for \$500,000 to the university for laboratory facilities to be used by ministry scientists working on development of "super" trees.

The MNR scientists are conducting genetic experiments with plant material from commercially valuable trees, such as black spruce and jack pine. The goal is to produce large quantities of tree seedlings that are genetically identical to a single superior tree which grows faster, straighter, and is more disease-resistant than naturally occurring trees.

This research is being carried on at Guelph to foster co-operation with a university which is renowned for its successes in plant biotechnology. A long-term operating agreement has been reached by MNR and Guelph whereby the ministry assumes administrative and equipment costs of the program, and the university provides the research accommodation and related services. The ministry unit will continue to be part of OTIFBI.

Ontario Forestry Council

We have extended and expanded the mandate of the Ontario Forestry Council, which was established in 1984 to identify research needs, make recommendations and review research activities.

The council, which has representatives from the Ontario and federal governments, industry and academic institutions, will continue its role for another three years, and it will now co-ordinate all forest research activities in the province. A

new subcommittee, the Ontario Forestry Research Committee, has been formed to set priorities and co-ordinate programs. This subcommittee was created by combining a number of existing federal and provincial research groups.

Forest Renewal

During this fiscal year, we will spend \$194-million on forest management in Ontario, and renew 130,000 hectares of forest. About 85 per cent of this program is conducted in northern Ontario.

As I have mentioned, there has been a major expansion in expenditures on forest management and the amount of forest regenerated since 1979. Tree planting has increased during this period from 75 million trees annually to 160 million. About half of the tree seedlings shipped to planting sites around the province every year are grown by private nurseries, and the other half are produced at MNR's own facilities.

The active partnership of my ministry and the forest industry through the Forest Management Agreement program has made possible the significant increase in the forest management program in the last eight years.

And because of tree-improvement research by MNR, we are not only renewing more forest land, we are also planting more high-quality trees. These trees also have a better chance of survival than ever before because of ministry and industry tending and protection activities.

We're doing more to protect valuable growing seedlings by

preparing sites better, weeding after planting and monitoring sites for fires and insect infestation.

During the past year, we implemented one of the key recommendations of the Provincial Auditor's report on forest management when we began tendering contracts for seedling supply. The initial contracts, which began in 1981, were for the purchase of 30 million seedlings from private growers in northern Ontario.

For this fiscal year, more than 93-million container stock seedlings are being purchased from private growers.

The new contracts include strict specifications for the seedling supply to ensure a high-quality product. They provide for substantial prepayments with the balance paid on delivery of healthy trees. A variety of optional contract periods are allowed to give flexibility for growers in meeting production targets.

Before this year, while the industry was developing, the ministry bore the lion's share of the risk of overwintering seedlings. In 1987-88, my ministry met with these private growers to develop an arrangement whereby the growers would start to carry a greater share of the risk. This industry has matured and is now sufficiently strong to compete for business in the marketplace.

COFRDA

I expect members of this committee are familiar with the Canada-Ontario Forest Resource Development Agreement, the \$150-million, five-year cost-sharing agreement signed

in 1984 by the federal and Ontario governments.

COFRDA was designed to support and enhance forest management in this province; it has done so by providing funding for a variety of valuable projects, ranging from building forest access roads to researching remote sensing technology via satellite.

But time and funding under this agreement are running out. We are within five months of the expiry date. It would be unfortunate if COFRDA were allowed to lapse without another agreement being signed.

The province has expressed to the federal government our keen interest in negotiating a replacement agreement. In fact, we have entered into preliminary discussions with our federal counterparts.

Members should be aware that fully 15 per cent of my ministry's forest renewal activities have been funded under COFRDA since 1984.

The existing agreement is an example of excellent government-to-government co-operation. The projects it has supported have been worthwhile. And it has served to draw government and industry together. In some projects, industry has joined in the co-operative financing.

Mr. Chairman, I talk a lot about how valuable our forests are to Ontario. Our partnership with the federal government through COFRDA has helped to enhance that value. I hope we can continue the good work. We will be aggressively seeking a federal commitment to a new forestry development agreement.

As a further reference to inter-governmental relations, I am pleased to note that in September, I assumed the chairmanship of the Canadian Council of Forest Ministers, which includes my federal counterpart and provincial ministers from across the country.

I would also like to let members know that early next March, we will be hosting in Toronto an investment symposium involving senior industry and investment sector representatives to look at forest investment opportunities in Canada.

And next September, Ontario will be hosting the annual meeting of the Canadian Council of Forest Ministers.

I have talked about our balanced approach to resource use as it relates to our forest resources. Let me expand on that approach and discuss how it relates to managing our public lands.

Again, we want to strike a balance so that we ensure that we get a range of social, economic and environmental benefits from these resources. And again our balanced vision is framed by conservation. We manage our public lands in a way that encourages development and also ensures that we protect and preserve the natural environment.

Crown Land as a Development Tool

I mentioned at the beginning of these remarks that 87 per cent of land in Ontario is owned by the Crown. That represents a tremendous resource to be used for public benefit. At MNR, we have been promoting initiatives

to use Crown land and water more effectively as an economic development tool, especially in northern Ontario. Our efforts are directed in such a way as to optimize the public benefits resulting from the use of Crown land.

There are 15 ministries on the steering committee overseeing the implementation of what we call the Crown Land as a Development Tool initiative. Our aim is to foster job opportunities, to stimulate new investment and to promote economic diversification in the north, all within a quality environment.

Aquaculture, peat extraction, hydroelectric development, water-based recreation, tourism and cottage development are some of the activities we encourage.

One of the specific development initiatives is the offer of longer-term tenure on Crown land and water to make it easier for entrepreneurs to obtain financing and to encourage the development of high-quality facilities.

Six primary development areas have been identified as an initial focus for intensified investment. These areas are Ear Falls, Ignace, Atikokan, Wawa, the Detour Lake/Abitibi corridor north of Cochrane and Whitney near Algonquin Park.

We are fostering co-operative action through area implementation teams, made up of representatives of MNR and other government ministries, municipal officials, northern development councils and various public interest groups. These teams review proposals for development in their areas.

In addition, the ministry has contracted with consultants to provide independent advice on the most beneficial uses of Crown land from a development viewpoint. The ministry has also asked the consultants for a comprehensive administrative review of the ministry's land disposition policies and practices for land management, and a market study on the demand and economics of cottage development.

Cottage lots on Crown land in northern Ontario were again made available in 1987, and the response has been good. About 200 lots were sold or leased last year, and the program is continuing.

Effective in 1988, we also extended a program whereby non-residents of Canada pay a fee for camping on Crown land north of the French and Mattawa rivers. The non-resident Crown land camping permits cost the same as interior camping permits in provincial parks and apply to persons 18 years of age and older.

A pilot project was conducted in MNR's Northwestern Region and Atikokan District before introducing the fee across the north. We found that the permit fee did not discourage visitors, and the revenue could assist in off-setting the costs of such services as garbage collection and maintenance of roads used for Crown land camping.

It also encourages non-residents to use tourist facilities in Ontario, and allows better management of popular Crown land camping sites.

Public Lands Act

Last June, amendments to update Ontario's Public Lands Act were passed by the Legislature. Some of the 18 amendments are designed to complement our development initiatives, and to help us protect Crown lands from abuse.

One amendment creates a multi-purpose work permit for construction and other operations on Crown lands, replacing the variety of work permits, letters of permission and other approvals now in use.

By cutting through some of the red tape which is currently associated with Crown land development, we will encourage more entrepreneurial development. The amendment also enables MNR to control or stop harmful operations being conducted without authorization.

Other amendments:

- o repeal a requirement that anyone who buys Crown lands and subdivides them within five years must forfeit 25 per cent of the purchase in land or cash;
- o make those who illegally dump or build on Crown lands liable for the cost of clean-up and rehabilitation of the lands;
- o increase the maximum fine under the act to \$5,000.

These amendments correct shortcomings in the existing Act which were drawn to our attention by members of the public.

Aggregates Resources Act

Last June, I also introduced a

new Aggregate Resources Act in the House to provide for better management of this valuable resource.

This new act is a major initiative for aggregate resource management in Ontario. The new bill will consolidate all legislation dealing with aggregate extraction into a single act. It will replace the Pits and Quarries Control Act, the Beach Protection Act and part of the Mining Act which deals with quarry permits.

Mineral aggregates contribute about \$1.5-billion in direct value to the Ontario economy annually. Under the new act, municipalities will have more involvement in the review of aggregate operations and will also receive more revenues. Closer controls on operations, more extensive and better quality rehabilitation of sites, and increased penalties for law-breakers are also included in the new act.

My ministry has prepared two new publications to help operators rehabilitate sites. One deals with restoration of pits and quarries for use as fish and wildlife habitat. This is particularly important in southern Ontario, where 95 per cent of the production of sand and gravel takes place. The other focuses on rehabilitation problems particular to northern Ontario.

During the summer and fall, the ministry undertook an expensive round of consultation on the new act with municipalities, the aggregate industry, environmental groups and other interest groups.

We are consulting with groups to explain the new act and the direction it will take and to

receive their views and consider their recommendations. I expect to introduce the Aggregate Resources Act for second reading soon and I urge members to support this important bill as it moves through the legislative process.

Shoreline Management

Shoreline management along the Great Lakes is an important part of the ministry's activities in managing lands and waters. It is another one of our program areas in which we have a lot of direct contact with the public, particularly property owners. It also involves co-operative action with local municipalities and other agencies.

Shoreline management requires both ongoing vigilance and quick reaction to emergencies. The same dry weather that caused us problems with fire risk in the north has reduced flood risk along the Great Lakes.

The all-time high water levels recorded on the Great Lakes in 1986 declined in 1987. The Conservation Authorities and Water Management Branch of MNR issued about 200 lake-level related advisories last year.

MNR's Streamflow Forecast Centre is part of a network which monitors high water levels. The centre has been computerizing its data collection operations since 1985. A few years ago, the centre's staff spent hours during critical flood periods reading water level gauges by telephone. Now, the computer reads the data, leaving staff free to spend their time on analysis and forecasting.

There are 260 data collection stations in Ontario which measure water levels in streams and lakes. They also measure record rainfall levels.

This spring, two large ice jams on the Goulais River north of Sault Ste. Marie caused a provincial flood emergency. The severe flooding cut off road access to more than 125 homes and buildings along the river, and a number of people had to be evacuated.

I toured the flood area at the time, and I was impressed with the co-operation and dedication of MNR district staff, the Goulais fire and rescue volunteers, the Ontario Provincial Police and others who worked around the clock to assist in the evacuation.

I was also pleased with the co-operation we received from the United States Coast Guard which provided ice-breakers to relieve pressure in Goulais Bay and allow the flood waters to abate.

Another part of our job is long-term shoreline management. In order to ensure we receive feedback from the public on what they think we should be doing in this area, the Shoreline Management Advisory Council was established in 1987 to solicit comments on shoreline issues and provide my office with advice.

The council released its report in September.

The ministry has produced Guidelines for Developing Great Lakes Shoreline Management Plans which emphasizes the importance of a team approach to tackling flood and erosion issues. The guidelines have been distributed to

Conservation Authorities and MNR field staff.

Other initiatives include preparation of hazard mapping for Great Lakes shorelines under the Canada Ontario Flood Damage Reduction Program, and MNR participation in the International Joint Commission studies related to Great Lakes water levels.

We are also working with the Ministry of Municipal Affairs on drafting a policy statement for shoreline management that will provide consistent planning direction for municipalities along the Great Lakes.

In addition, we co-operated with several provincial ministries, the Association of Conservation Authorities of Ontario, the Municipal Engineers Association and the Urban Development Institute, in the development of guidelines for urban drainage design and erosion and sediment control in urban areas.

Flood Plain Planning

While on the topic of flooding and erosion, I want to mention that recently my colleague the Minister of Municipal Affairs and I informed the House that Cabinet has approved a joint provincial policy statement on Flood Plain Planning. The policy statement will be issued under section 3 of the Planning Act.

It allows local governments flexibility when drafting land use plans for areas susceptible to flooding.

It recognizes that flooding is a public health and safety matter and, therefore, a matter of provincial interest.

The policy statement requires that all ministries, boards, commissions, municipalities and planning agencies must now "have regard" for flood susceptible lands, and incorporate policies to address new development in flood plains in land use planning documents, such as Official Plans and zoning bylaws.

The statement strengthens the province's policies for flood plain management.

Conservation Authorities

The achievements of Ontario's 38 Conservation Authorities include not only flood control, but also; wetland protection, erosion control, conservation education, wildlife management, heritage preservation and outdoor recreation. In the current fiscal year, the province will provide a total of \$42.9-million to Conservation Authorities for various water management, conservation and recreation projects within their watersheds.

I'm sure members of this committee are familiar with the review of the role of Conservation Authorities in Ontario. We launched this review at the request of the authorities themselves and others. We agreed that it was time for a comprehensive look at where they are now and where they should be going in future.

To do this, we appointed an inter-ministerial committee to examine the responsibilities, structure, membership, grant rates and funding levels of the authorities. The committee included representatives of Natural Resources, Environment, Agriculture and Food, Tourism and Recreation, Municipal

Affairs and Treasury and Economics.

The committee has completed its review and I released its report in June.

The committee recommends making program delivery more consistent, and clearly defining responsibilities and clarifying the role of CAs in many areas. The proposed program changes will free-up funds to maintain the existing investment in water control structures and recreational facilities.

The committee found that efficiency, cost-effectiveness and consistent program delivery can be improved.

That's why the committee suggests amalgamating Conservation Authorities in southern Ontario within two years to reduce the total to 18 from 33.

The committee also feels that reducing the Conservation Authorities membership by approximately 600, will permit all members to participate in the full decision-making of their authorities and will improve efficiency.

The committee also wants to reduce the variation in funding for CAs by eliminating all supplementary grants and establishing three provincial grant rates of 40, 50 or 70 per cent against the cost of all programs.

The new grant rates will free-up provincial funding by \$5-million. The committee recommends that this \$5-million stay in the program and be augmented by an additional \$5-million to help authorities maintain the existing

investment in water management structures and recreational facilities.

Conservation Authorities, affected municipalities, special interest groups and the public are currently responding to the report. Conservation Authorities will continue to play a key role in resource management in this province.

Remote Sensing

I have already mentioned some of the new technology and technology development we are working on in forestry, fire management and shoreline management. One of the most exciting areas for "high-tech" research in my ministry is remote sensing and digitized mapping.

Our Geographical Information Service system is designed to consolidate a vast array of information on land, land use and resources, and make it easily accessible. The applications for use of this information system are literally countless. Some of the more obvious ones are land use planning, transportation, and environmental controls.

A municipality planning a new subdivision will eventually be able to call up the geographical data on the site on its computer and identify features of the area, such as potential flooding problems, the location of a valuable wildlife habitat, sewer lines and highways.

We have begun pilot projects in Cambridge and Timmins districts to determine how a district-wide, integrated geographical information system could best be used by local municipalities, Conservation

Authorities, planners and emergency service agencies.

If you are wondering why we have included emergency service agencies, there is a very good reason. One day, the ambulance dispatcher is going to be able to plot the best route to your doorstep using this computerized information system.

The Map Data Interchange Format that we have developed is attracting interest not just across Canada, but internationally. This format would allow for communication of data between different computer systems.

We are also involved in state-of-the-art computer analysis and mapping from satellite pictures of our forests. Again, the applications are fantastic. Our Centre for Remote Sensing and the North Central regional office are co-operating in a project to map forest sites according to their "burnability". The data will be integrated with information on forest fire control.

Another application involves mapping the regrowth of forests after logging or fire, using satellite pictures and computer analysis.

In remote sensing, when they say the sky's the limit, they aren't kidding!

Native Affairs

This will be the last time I will be reporting in Estimates on native land claims research and associated policy functions. In the interest of consolidating the government's approach to native issues, these responsibilities were

transferred in 1988 to the Ontario Native Affairs Directorate.

Staff in my ministry are working closely with the Native Affairs Directorate to make progress on hunting, fishing, trapping and other natural resource issues that affect native people, and to provide expertise on land and resource issues relating to land claims.

It should also be noted that my ministry is making a more concerted effort through its public involvement processes to involve native communities.

We recognize that native communities have felt excluded from much of the development going on around them in the north. We are asking for specific input from native people on such issues as timber management and parks management plans.

I should also mention a major development project involving a native community that I announced last week.

The Pic/Heron Bay Indian Band will be moving ahead with a \$20-million small hydro project near Marathon on the northeast shore of Lake Superior.

The Crown-owned site for the small hydro project will be leased to the Begetekong Power Corporation, which is jointly owned by the Pic/Heron Band and David Carter, a hydro developer with three projects in the Dryden area.

The project will produce 12 megawatts of electricity. The revenue generated by sales of the electricity will help the band improve the economic and social well-being of the Heron Bay area.

This project is the largest small hydro development undertaken so far as part of the Crown Land as a Development Tool program.

Protecting Wildlife

It's hard to know where to begin in talking about my ministry's programs in protection of wildlife. Because protecting wildlife and wildlife habitat is part of so much of what we do.

Our programs to protect valuable wetlands and other Areas of Natural and Scientific Interest benefit wildlife.

Our provincial parks system provides long-term protection for large blocks of wildlife habitat.

Our Conservation Land Tax Reduction program, approved by the Legislature last June, encourages private landowners to keep important wetlands and other sites in their undeveloped, natural state, and, in so doing, protect wildlife.

Our timber management planning process includes guidelines to protect moose habitat. Additional guidelines to enhance protection of habitat for other species are being completed.

Our environmental monitoring of the effects of acid rain and other sources of contamination to wildlife is another way in which we practise protection.

Our enforcement activities help protect wildlife by ensuring that the laws and regulations governing the use of wildlife are obeyed.

Then there are all the MNR

programs directly involved with protecting endangered species, reintroducing wildlife species that have been lost to this province, rehabilitating habitat, combating rabies, providing information on wildlife to the public ... and so on.

As I mentioned earlier, at MNR we actively work with non-government organizations to pursue common goals.

An example of this co-operation is our relationship with Ducks Unlimited Canada. In June, I was pleased to be able to announce that we have signed a new five-year agreement with Ducks Unlimited.

Under the agreement, MNR will contribute \$3.3-million to our ongoing waterfowl management program, and Ducks Unlimited will commit \$16-million to maintain, create and restore 10,000 hectares of waterfowl habitat in northern and southern Ontario.

Because our wildlife programs are so wide-ranging, and because there is growing interest in this area among the public, I have come to a view that what is needed is a new and comprehensive look at all of our wildlife issues. I have asked my staff to prepare the necessary material for the initiation of such a process.

Let me describe briefly some of our wildlife activities:

Wildlife '87

Last year marked the 100th anniversary of the creation of the first wildlife sanctuary in North America at Last Mountain Lake in Saskatchewan. To celebrate, MNR participated in Wildlife '87, a national

conservation awareness program.

Each month, MNR honored an individual who had made a major contribution to wildlife in Ontario with a "Conservationist of the Month" award. This was so successful that we are continuing the awards and we have broadened the criteria to include all aspects of conservation.

I think this program is useful in highlighting the real difference that an individual can make in conservation issues.

Wild Turkeys

Another symbol of wildlife in Ontario is the wild turkey. We used it as the 1987 symbol of National Wildlife Week in Ontario because of the successful reintroduction program carried out since 1984.

The wild turkey became extinct in Ontario in the early 1900s because of loss of habitat. Unregulated hunting at the turn of the century also likely contributed to the loss of the wild turkey. We have been able to turn this around and bring back a native species that had disappeared from the province. We have worked co-operatively with the Ontario Federation of Anglers and Hunters and others to reintroduce wild turkeys brought in from the United States.

By last year, numbers were sufficiently large in eastern Ontario that a controlled hunt was held in Napanee District. Hunters were required to attend mandatory training sessions before being allowed to hunt this challenging game bird.

In 1987, MNR issued 636 validation tags to hunters and

64 wild turkeys were harvested. Another hunt was held in Napanee District this spring. A total of 582 tags were issued and 71 birds were harvested.

Wild turkeys continue to increase in numbers and additional hunts are authorized for three more areas next spring -- Huronia, Cambridge and Simcoe districts. In addition there will be another hunt in Napanee District.

Endangered Species

Mr. Chairman, my ministry does a tremendous amount of work in the protection of certain species of wildlife. However, our practical efforts to improve the status of many species would have to be curtailed if it weren't for the co-operation and assistance we receive from interested private corporations, volunteer organizations and individuals.

We have completed our twelfth year in the program to release peregrine falcons to the wild. Our efforts to improve the status of this endangered species have been aided by a diverse array of groups.

In southern Ontario, three release centres were selected in 1988 -- Hamilton, Guelph and Kitchener-Waterloo. A total of 14 peregrines were released in these three centres. Volunteer members of several naturalist clubs played a very active role, caring for the birds and monitoring their progress. In Ottawa, the Canadian Wildlife Service and MNR have been assisted by Agriculture Canada, the National Museum of Natural Sciences and the Ottawa Field Naturalists Club.

Earlier this year I was happy to be able to report there is

evidence that the peregrine falcon is coming back from near extinction in eastern North America.

Three female peregrines released in Ontario have paired with males in the eastern United States and Quebec and produced at least five chicks.

Two of these females were released by the ministry in Toronto, and one was released in the Niagara Peninsula.

In addition, we have confirmation that a pair of peregrines in Ontario has produced two chicks. However, we don't know the origin of the parent birds.

My ministry is co-operating with the Federation of Ontario Naturalists and other volunteers to reintroduce the Trumpeter swan to wetlands in southern Ontario. Our efforts are designed to re-establish the Trumpeter swan and halt the spread of the European mute swan, an aggressive invader.

In 1987, the Grand River Conservation Authority and MNR co-operated on a program to release bald eagles to the wild at the Taquanyah conservation area, near Cayuga -- with the help of the Hamilton Naturalists Club, World Wildlife Fund and Air Canada.

The time, energy and funds devoted by various groups to the cause of protecting wildlife in Ontario is immensely encouraging.

Breeding Bird Atlas

The Atlas of Breeding Birds of Ontario, published last fall, is another example of how volunteer agencies and individuals can make a

contribution. This atlas is the product of the work of more than 1,400 volunteers across Ontario.

The atlas identifies the breeding distribution and abundance of every avian species which breeds in the province. The Federation of Ontario Naturalists and the Long Point Bird Observatory sponsored the project.

The ministry contributed funding and support, including transportation and accommodation for some volunteer field workers, particularly in the north.

In addition, a number of those volunteers who worked on the atlas were MNR employees, who donated their own time.

Avian Emblem

One of the species in the atlas is the common loon. We have proposed that the common loon become the avian emblem for the province.

The loon was the overwhelming choice of Ontario children who entered our contest to recommend a provincial bird.

We will ask the Legislature to pass an Avian Emblem Act and adopt the common loon as Ontario's official provincial bird.

Community Wildlife Involvement Program

One of our major success stories in terms of public involvement in resource management is the Community Wildlife Involvement Program, known as CWIP.

Last year, more than 5,000 volunteers donated close to

50,000 hours of work on 172 projects under this involvement program. These projects include habitat rehabilitation, enhancing of wildlife populations, contributing to wildlife research -- and a host of unique and innovative participatory ideas.

The 1987 winner for the best project was the Pollution Probe Foundation for its creation of an ecology park in a derelict parking lot in downtown Toronto. The park is a haven for urban wildlife, such as birds and butterflies.

MNR provided \$4,000 over two years for plants and other vegetation. More than 120 volunteers spent about 3,500 hours preparing the ground, planting trees and shrubs, and installing interpretive signs and trails in the park. Volunteers continue to maintain the park.

Since the wildlife involvement program began, more than 500 wildlife projects across the province have been completed or are being worked on.

These projects benefit wildlife, but they also benefit those who participate because the projects are an education for those who get involved.

One of the important duties of my ministry is to protect wildlife and plant species. Since 1977, the ministry has produced 34 status reports and 24 field studies on species which are rare, threatened, endangered or fall under other categories of concern.

MNR's Wildlife Branch manages endangered species, animal and plant species in Ontario. In 1987, four rare plants were protected under Ontario's

Endangered Species Act. The four plants are the Cucumber Tree, the Heart-Leaved Plantain, the Prickly Pear Cactus and the Large Whorled Pogonia. The plants are found only in localized parts of southwestern Ontario and are endangered by the destruction of their natural habitat and other factors.

These additions bring the total number of plants and animals officially listed as endangered species in Ontario to 18. The Endangered Species Act provides for fines and/or imprisonment for those convicted of damaging or harming protected species or their habitat.

In addition to endangered species, my ministry also has concern for other species of birds, animals, reptiles, amphibians, invertebrates and plants that are valued for recreational, aesthetic, scientific, educational, economic and other reasons, and for their essential role as components of healthy ecosystems. MNR wildlife managers, like those across North America, are becoming increasingly involved in the management and protection of all wildlife, not just those species that are hunted.

Among our measures to conserve nongame species, my ministry has prepared management guidelines for osprey, herons and other species, and has assisted the development of important databases such as the Ontario Breeding Bird Atlas, which I mentioned a few moments ago.

Enforcement

Another important part of our protection program is enforcement. We have 239

conservation officers, supported by about 450 deputies, enforcing more than 18 federal and provincial statutes.

Last year, officers contacted over 438,000 resource users. They issued 15,262 warnings, and laid 7,341 charges for offenses relating to fishing and hunting under the Game and Fish Act of Ontario, the Migratory Birds Convention Act of Canada, the Fisheries Act of Canada, and other acts and regulations.

Working with parks and fire personnel in enforcing the Provincial Parks Act, the Public Lands Act, the Forest Fire Prevention Act and other statutes, officers laid more than 4,450 charges.

Most of our resource users are responsible citizens. Some people try to get away with something they know they shouldn't now and then. But there are always a few people who exhibit an appalling disregard for the law and for the impact of their actions on existing resources and the future of those resources.

Fortunately, those people represent a minority. Recognizing this, ministry enforcement staff are putting new emphasis on something our officers have always done: informing and educating the public. Conservation officers are active in schools, in service clubs and sportsmen's groups. They are involved in community wildlife and fisheries improvement programs. They do lay charges for infractions; but they also are in touch with thousands of resource users every year, educating and informing.

Game and Fish Act

While we are on the subject of game and fish changes, I should give members an update on amendments to the Game and Fish Act. As you are aware, amendments, which were introduced in the Legislature some time ago and died on the order paper, are currently under review by my ministry.

Some of these proposed amendments are housekeeping matters, and some represent substantive change. I am concerned that the delay in proceeding with the housekeeping matters could detract from the effectiveness of some of our programs. On the other hand, I realize there is a limit to the amount of patching that can be done to existing legislation.

As I mentioned a moment ago, it is time for a comprehensive review of wildlife issues, and I will have more to say on the subject in due time.

Deer Management

The deer herd in Ontario has more than doubled since 1980 to an estimated quarter of a million animals.

Major factors in the growth of the herd to levels not seen in Ontario since early in this century are MNR's selective harvest and controlled hunt programs and the milder winters we have been having.

Managing deer at high population levels means holding densities at levels consistent with the carrying capacity of the range, other land uses and maintenance of healthy deer. This management program avoids the dramatic changes in deer numbers usually associated with

overpopulation.

We have extended hunting seasons and opened seasons in new areas in 1988.

In 1987, more than 130,000 hunters participated in the hunt, harvesting 37,911 deer.

Through field studies being conducted in the Co-operative Deer Study, MNR is acquiring vital information about Ontario's deer herd in such areas as winter feeding, migration habits and survival rates.

Moose Management

The 1988 moose hunting season was delayed for a week across mid-Ontario to protect adult bulls during the mating season and to ensure an increase in the herd.

MNR's target is a doubling of the moose herd in Ontario by the year 2000. Under the selective harvest program, introduced in 1983, the herd has already grown from 80,000 to more than 110,000.

By delaying the opening of the season until October 8, we reduced potential overharvesting that can occur when the hunt coincides with the peak of the rut -- a time when bulls are less cautious.

This is important because overharvesting this year can only result in a reduced hunt next year. The tag quotas in each management unit are based on the planned harvest and hunter success rates in the previous year.

In 1987, as a result of concerns raised by hunters, a review of the selective harvest program resulted in some

changes in procedures. The tourist industry moose tag allocation system was changed to give outfitters security in planning and marketing moose hunting packages in advance of the season.

In addition, tags left surplus after the resident draw were redistributed on a first-call, first-served basis through a toll-free telephone number.

Also in the survey, a majority of hunters favored a return to party hunting for adult moose.

Earlier this fall, I outlined our response by announcing that moose hunters are allowed to hunt co-operatively as members of a party for adult bull and cow moose. I should note that party hunting for calf moose has been permitted since 1986.

Black Bear Management

Changes governing the hunting of black bear have been introduced as part of the development of a new black bear management program.

Licence fees were increased in 1988, and a number of restrictions have been placed on hunting. It is now illegal to hunt cubs or cubs accompanied by adult sows, and hunting is prohibited within 400 metres of a garbage dump. Non-resident hunters must use the services of an Ontario tourist outfitter.

In addition, we are moving ahead with measures that will improve the ministry's ability to monitor black bear and eliminate competition among tourist operators.

I have announced that the ministry will establish a system of bear management areas

across the province. Among other things, this measure will reduce harvest pressure on the provincial population of black bears.

Under the program, active bear-hunting outfitters in each ministry district will be assigned bear management areas that take into account the areas outfitters traditionally hunt.

Caribou Program

Ontario's least known big game animal is the woodland caribou. A few thousand caribou spend the summer along the Hudson Bay coast, migrating annually from Manitoba.

MNR is conducting research on the caribou, and is putting radio-collars on some of them to track their movements. Biologists are studying the herd near Pen Island, about 30 kilometres east of the Manitoba border.

There are also scattered herds north of Lake Superior and on the Slate Islands, near Terrace Bay. The ministry is trying to reintroduce caribou to some other islands to increase the range of the caribou.

Fur Management

It was four years in the making, but the reference book, Wild Furbearer Management and Conservation in North America, published in 1988, was certainly worth the time and effort.

Produced as a joint initiative of the ministry and the Ontario Trappers Association, this 1,168-page book is beautifully illustrated and examines all aspects of biology and management of all furbearers on

the continent. Many other government and non-government agencies assisted in its production.

It was written by 104 experts, and checked for accuracy and completeness by 225 leading wildlife authorities. We believe it will become the premier reference encyclopedia of its kind in North America for naturalists, biologists, students, wildlife administrators -- in fact, for anyone who wants the most up-to-date information available on wild furbearers and the fur industry. A companion publication, called Furbearer Harvests in North America 1600-1984, contains information on the annual historical harvest levels for furbearer species.

My ministry continues its involvement in trapper education and humane trapping. In 1987-88, some 50 fur harvest, fur management and conservation courses teaching basic-level trapping were given across the province to more than 800 new trappers. In addition, several thousand trappers attended one-day workshops. This fall, the ministry began testing a variety of traps in northern Ontario for humaneness, efficiency and selectivity.

Rabies Research

The ministry has established an international reputation for its research to control rabies in wildlife.

Foxes and skunks are the two species which spread rabies in Ontario. The province annually experiences more cases of rabies in animals than any other jurisdiction in North America. That is why the

Ontario government and my ministry place a high priority on controlling the problem of rabies.

Several years of careful research are bringing us close to a real control program. In 1987 we successfully tested a bait and vaccine combination which works well in foxes.

Machinery to mass produce the bait was developed this summer and we are now ready to undertake rabies control over several counties in eastern Ontario. We are working with the ministries of Health, Agriculture and Food, and with Agriculture Canada to further implement this scientific breakthrough in our work to curb the spread of rabies among foxes.

Unfortunately, skunks are not protected by the present vaccine. The search for a skunk vaccine continues. In addition, a ministry research team is trying an alternate method to eliminate rabies from city habitats, where skunks are the major carriers of the disease. In 1987 and 1988, in a 60-square-kilometre block in Scarborough, skunks were trapped and then vaccinated by injection. This summer there was not a single case of rabies in the Scarborough block.

Environmental Monitoring

My ministry is engaged in a number of projects to monitor the effect that acidic precipitation and the deposition of other contaminants is having on the health of Ontario's natural resources.

My ministry provides support to the Ministry of the Environment, which is the lead

ministry in government on this issue. We monitor the impact of contaminants on forests, fish and wildlife. We also support research into the sources and pathways of contamination.

In the Fisheries Acidification Program, in conjunction with the environment ministry, we have carried out chemical surveys on more than 2,000 lakes and assessed fish species in 200 lakes. We are looking into why some fish species appear to be more susceptible to the effects of acid rain than others.

Air pollution is a relatively new stress on our forests, and care must be taken to decipher what effects are attributable to pollution, and which to natural cycles of decline.

The ministry also contributed funds, along with other ministries, to a remote sensing project on test sites showing forest stress symptoms in Europe using an Ontario designed airborne sensor. We are interested in whether the remote sensing technique can assess defoliation.

MNR is involved in tracing heavy metal contaminants in wildlife that represent various levels in the food chain, such as American kestrel, waterfowl and black bear.

Projects have included a three-year study of Eastern kingbirds near Killarney in northeastern Ontario, and a study of wood frogs near Sudbury.

We are co-operating with university scientists in investigating pathways of cadmium, an element in rocks that can be released by acid

rain. Cadmium is put into the atmosphere by zinc smelters, manufacturing processes, fertilizers and pesticides and the burning of fossil fuels.

Based on preliminary investigations of cadmium concentrations in moose and deer organs in 1985 and 1986, the ministry warned hunters in some areas of the province not to eat the kidneys and liver of moose, kidneys of deer and liver from older deer.

Mr. Chairman, there are many other wildlife programs I could talk about today, but I should move on to other topics.

Fisheries

My next topic concerns our fisheries resource, which provides Ontario with many benefits.

This province can boast some of the best sport fishing anywhere on the continent, providing recreational opportunities for Ontarians, and encouraging tourism.

We have long known of the benefits from our fisheries for northern Ontario, and we expect that the north will continue to draw sport fishermen to its fabulous lakes and rivers.

But some of the best news on fisheries lately has been in the Great Lakes in southern Ontario -- in the Bay of Quinte, Lake Ontario and west Lake Erie and upper Lake Huron where there has been a veritable explosion of interest in sport fishing.

In an industry which generates some \$1.76-billion annually in expenditures on angling across the province, this trend in sport fishing is good economic

news indeed.

I also think there is a growing appreciation among the public, and particularly among users of the resource, of the need to manage our fisheries resource wisely to ensure that the benefits to Ontario are lasting.

The enthusiastic reaction of sport fishermen to the introduction of a resident sport fishing licence is, I believe, indicative of the willingness of resource users to contribute actively to the ministry's ongoing efforts to maintain or re-establish fish populations, and rehabilitate habitat.

Sport Fishing Licence

Since the licence was introduced for the 1987 season, we have sold almost two million licences. Revenues from sales of the 1987 licence, which ran from November 1986 to the end of March 1988, amounted to \$9.3-million, more than \$1-million higher than we anticipated.

Sales of the 1988 licence have been every bit as successful.

For the current fiscal year we have allocations of \$9.318-million from projected licence revenues.

Since the beginning of the sport fishing licence program, the money from the licence fees has been allocated to approximately 1,000 fisheries management projects. The funds have allowed us to greatly expand our fisheries management program.

Projects funded under this initiative to date have

included inventory and assessment, which involves investigating fish communities and their habitat. Other projects have dealt with population and habitat management, including improvements to spawning areas, stream and lake rehabilitation, and construction of fishways and access points.

Revenues also went into fisheries research to improve fish stocks and fish culture to increase production, increased enforcement of fisheries regulations and public information and educational services and the Community Fisheries Involvement Program.

The approximate breakdown of allocations is as follows: 26 per cent on inventory and assessment, 22 per cent on population and habitat management, 15 per cent on enforcement, 12 per cent on public information, community involvement and education, seven per cent on administrative costs of the licence program, and 18 per cent on research, culture and minor capital costs.

Some of the specific projects supported by the licence allocations have included:

- o assistance with private and municipal fish hatcheries in Thunder Bay and Sault Ste. Marie;
- o reintroduction of Atlantic salmon in Lake Ontario;
- o habitat and fish population studies throughout the north;
- o stocking of adult walleye, and smallmouth bass in lakes through northern Ontario to provide new fishing opportunities;
- o an increase in the stocking

- of splake and rainbow trout in eastern Ontario.
- o improvements to spawning sites and improved fish passageways in areas of central and southern Ontario.

Fisheries Advisory Council

In the introduction to these remarks, I mentioned the appointment of the Ontario Fisheries Advisory Council under the chairmanship of Dr. E. J. Crossman of the Royal Ontario Museum.

This committee has reviewed and will continue to review the use of revenues from sales of the resident sport fishing licence.

I look forward to the release of the committee's report later this year.

The committee has also given me useful advice on proposed new programs and provincial policies dealing with fisheries management.

Community Fisheries Involvement Program

No discussion of fisheries in Ontario would be complete without addressing the success of our Community Fisheries Involvement Program.

After six years of operation, the fisheries involvement program is more popular and successful than ever. About \$514,000 was spent on 212 projects in 1987, the highest number in the program's history. This year, we've again budgeted more than \$500,000 for the community fisheries program. As of the end of July, more than \$233,000 has been granted to 125 projects.

The projects are becoming more varied, and more organizations are becoming involved. In northern Ontario, a number of outfitters are working together to sponsor projects to improve walleye populations and habitat. More cottagers are also catching the spirit of this valuable program.

Atlantic Salmon

The reintroduction of the Atlantic salmon to Lake Ontario is one of our more exciting projects. This fabulous game fish has been extinct in Ontario for nearly a century.

This is a 10-year experiment to re-establish a strain of this historic fish in Lake Ontario. The salmon disappeared from Ontario because of destruction of its habitat caused by development and the building of dams which prevented the salmon from reaching its spawning grounds.

With the rehabilitation of many rivers flowing into Lake Ontario, our fisheries experts believe that suitable habitat is once again available for Atlantic salmon. We have imported eggs from the United States and raised them at the Normandale fish hatchery near Simcoe.

About 30,000 smolts are being stocked this year. Over the next five years, the ministry will stock 50,000 a year. New York State is also stocking 50,000 Atlantic salmon a year in Lake Ontario.

Because we are in a trial period, we are asking anglers to release any Atlantic salmon they may catch in the next few years.

I am very optimistic that this

reintroduction program will be successful.

Research and Rehabilitation

Our Fisheries Branch is involved in a great deal of research and rehabilitation work. I will not take the time of this committee to go into detail on all of it. As I have done with other program areas, I will just mention a few items.

- o We are co-operating with other ministries and governments to help clean up 21 environmental "areas of concern" on the Great Lakes. These areas were identified by the Great Lakes Water Quality Board of the International Joint Commission. MNR is part of the Remedial Action Plan teams working on improving water quality in these areas. These teams include government and non-government representatives.
- o We are developing a system for classifying fisheries habitat to ensure that critical areas around the province are identified and protected.
- o The new Harwood Fish Culture Station on Rice Lake near Cobourg was officially opened in 1987. This modern fish hatchery is raising 600,000 lake trout and brown trout. A new facility at the Tarentorus Fish Culture Station near Sault Ste. Marie will greatly increase fish production at the site, using the latest in new technology.
- o A rehabilitation project for whitefish in Lake Simcoe moved from the pilot stage

to a major stocking program in 1987.

Commercial Fishing

Commercial fishing contributes about \$130-million annually to the Ontario economy.

As in other resource areas, the ministry is working with the industry to ensure that the fisheries resource is protected and that the commercial fishing industry prospers. We are doing our best to promote co-operation between the sport fishing community and the commercial industry.

A contentious issue between sports fishermen and commercial fishermen has been the size of incidental catch in commercial nets. We have approached this on a lake-by-lake basis to ensure fairness to all concerned.

Commercial fishermen have generally co-operated well with us in monitoring of incidental catch on the Great Lakes.

The results of a study of Long Point Bay on Lake Erie indicated there is room for both commercial and sport fishing. The best smallmouth bass fishing in the province is found at Long Point Bay. And those waters also support a lucrative commercial industry.

Our study showed incidental catch of bass and other non-target species make up only a very small part -- about 2.4 per cent by weight -- of the commercial harvest in the area. We are taking steps to reduce the incidental catch in Long Point Bay.

Gill nets have been banned in the inner part of Long Point Bay since the early 1970s. As

a show of good faith, commercial fishermen in the Port Dover area have agreed to make some adjustments, such as moving nets one kilometre farther from shore this year to further reduce incidental catch levels.

I am pleased with that kind of co-operation. It shows that the commercial industry in the area recognizes that the fisheries resource must be protected and shared, and that the best way to do that is to work together.

The ministry will continue to monitor the situation on Long Point Bay.

Major changes in the management of commercial fisheries at the eastern end of Lake Ontario were implemented this year because of problems with incidental catch.

In the 1988 and 1989 fishing seasons, gill nets have been prohibited in the eastern basin from May 1 to June 30, in the North Channel near Kingston from May 1 to August 31, and in an area off Brighton from May 1 to July 31.

These restrictions result from a ministry study which revealed high incidental catches of lake trout and immature walleye and smaller catches of smallmouth bass and other fish.

A number of other changes have been made in the eastern end of Lake Ontario, including an experimental commercial walleye harvest in 1989, using live-capture gear only. There is also a buy-out program to respond to those commercial operators who have expressed an interest in selling their businesses to the province. The buy-out program will expire

December 15, 1988.

We will continue with our monitoring program in Lake Ontario and the rest of the Great Lakes, and will make decisions based on local conditions -- and in the interests of the fisheries resource and the people of Ontario.

Fisheries Strategy

It was in 1976 that MNR began developing a Strategic Plan for Ontario Fisheries. We pulled together a federal-provincial task force to develop long-term plans for management of our fisheries resource.

We have accomplished a great deal since then through fisheries research, habitat and fish community rehabilitation programs, monitoring and controls on harvesting and other management initiatives.

But a strategy developed more than a decade ago will require some adjustments for the decade ahead.

MNR decided last year to review the strategic plan for fisheries to ensure it will serve us well into the 1990s. Again, we looked to outside advice to help us. We involved other Ontario ministries and the federal Department of Fisheries and Oceans.

Our next step is to review the new strategy with a broad range of interest groups and non-government organizations. More than 220 people have contributed so far to our strategic policy review. The review is still ongoing, but there are a few comments I can make.

While the issues facing

fisheries managers are not very different from those of a decade ago, there is a change of emphasis and public perception.

Our new strategy for the 1990s will have to take into account these and other new developments. As in other areas of resource management at MNR, we will be relying more and more on public involvement and participation. We will be emphasizing openness and communication.

Parks and Recreational Areas

I have already talked about the expansion of our parks system with the addition of 53 new parks, and our new parks policy that increases protection of wilderness parks and nature reserves.

I would also like to tell you about our parks revitalization program. Our provincial parks system is going to be celebrating its 100th birthday in 1993, and we are already gearing up for the event.

I don't think it is possible to over-emphasize the important role our parks play in the lives of Ontarians.

Our parks offer a getaway, a natural refuge from the urban lifestyle. In these harried times, this is an escape to be treasured.

Our parks provide enjoyment for about seven and a half million visitors every year. That means a fair bit of wear and tear on our facilities. That's why we have launched a five-year, multi-million dollar upgrading program.

Many of our most popular parks, such as Algonquin, Lake

Superior, Sleeping Giant, Pinery and Killarney, will be getting new and improved facilities as part of our parks revitalization.

In addition to making capital improvements, we are always looking for ways to make the parks system more responsive to the needs and demands of users. We involve the public in the development of park management plans, which set out how a park is to be used, protected, developed and managed over the long term.

We use open houses, public meetings, workshops and contacts with organizations such as volunteer, community, and environmental groups and associations to solicit comments on parks management. Management plans have been approved for 78 parks. We will be moving ahead with park management planning, and broad public consultation, for the other 192 parks in the system.

Parks Council

The Ontario Provincial Parks Council, a citizens advisory group which provides the ministry with advice on parks issues, carried out its own survey of parks services and customer satisfaction last year.

We are delighted with the results -- 96 per cent of those surveyed pronounced themselves satisfied with parks service.

The suggestions for improvements are being taken into account in our upgrading program for our parks.

The council has suggested that we offer the disabled the highest level of accessibility, consistent with our policies on

protection for parks. The council also feels we should pay particular attention to access for the disabled and elderly to parks near urban areas.

We were moving ahead on improved access well before the council made its suggestions. We remain committed to making changes that improve access for the disabled and the council's suggestions further reinforce the need to enhance the parks system for the disabled and the elderly.

All new visitors centres in parks, such as those being developed for Pinery, Petroglyphs and Algonquin parks, will be "universally accessible" to people with vision, hearing and mobility impairments.

Pinery also has a new trail which is accessible to people confined to wheelchairs.

In addition, all new capital construction and all retrofitting of existing facilities will meet the new provisions of the building code concerning access for the disabled.

The complete report of the survey conducted by the parks council will be available later this month when the council releases its annual report.

I should also mention that the ministry has conducted a research study on the effect of the changing demographics, including the elderly, in Ontario society on the parks system.

We are now looking at implications of the study on future directions for park planning and development.

New National Park

I take some personal satisfaction in the creation of Canada's 33rd national park, the Bruce Peninsula National Park.

My ministry played a key role in negotiations over resource uses in the Bruce Peninsula area which led to establishment of this new national park. Two provincial parks, Cyprus and Fathom Five, and two provincial nature reserves were amalgamated into the new park, which was officially created last July.

In all, my ministry contributed more than \$8-million in land and assets free of charge to the federal government for this wonderful new park in Ontario.

Heritage Rivers

Members will also be interested to hear that the Mattawa River is the second river in Ontario to be designated a Canadian Heritage River. Our first heritage river was the French River. Ontario has also nominated the Missinaibi River, the Bloodvein River and the Boundary Waters-Voyageur Waterway.

Wetlands Strategy

Throughout this review of my ministry's work, the theme of protection and conservation has been a major one. Our parks and recreational areas protect a number of valuable ecological communities. In fact, under the new parks policy, 80 per cent of the 6.3-million hectares of provincial parkland in Ontario is wilderness or nature reserve class parks, which offer strict protection to the natural environment.

Wetlands are a valuable part of Ontario's natural heritage, and MNR has a comprehensive strategy to secure, research and evaluate wetlands. The importance of swamps and bogs has not been well appreciated in the past, which is why about three-quarters of southern Ontario's wetlands have been lost to land clearance, drainage, filling and shoreline development.

This ministry has developed a wide-ranging strategy on wetlands in recognition of their importance to the environment. Wetlands maintain and improve water quality, help control flooding and provide fish and wildlife habitat.

Our wetlands strategy encompasses action on a number of fronts, often in co-operation with other interested groups.

My colleague, the Minister of Municipal Affairs, and I recently announced details of a draft policy statement on planning for wetlands.

This draft policy statement recognizes the ecological, recreational and economic values of provincially significant wetlands and the need to consider those values in land use planning. It indicates this government's commitment to the protection of valuable wetlands.

The draft policy statement and implementation guidelines will be released for public review next month. There will be a six-month review period to allow time for municipalities and other interested groups to study it.

The final version of the policy statement will be included in

section three of the Planning Act. It will be an effective tool in making sound land use planning decisions related to wetlands. It will give planning officials a clear mandate to incorporate wetland values in their planning decisions on land use.

Beyond this, we are researching the issues involved in protecting certain ecological areas, and we plan to consult extensively with the public.

In addition, the ministry recently issued an important report on wetlands. Called Provincially and Regionally Significant Wetlands in Southern Ontario, Interim Report, it lists the biological, hydrological, social and other special features of 152 wetlands.

The report will help planning agencies and municipalities plan more effectively and make better land use decisions affecting wetlands.

This is also another good example of the co-operative efforts of the ministry.

Evaluations were carried out by the ministry, Conservation Authorities and the Canadian Wildlife Service.

Preparation of the report was sponsored by the World Wildlife Fund, with support from the Ontario Federation of Anglers and Hunters.

More than 700 wetlands were studied for this report. A second report on other wetlands which have been evaluated will be published when the analysis is complete.

Another important initiative is our Conservation Land Tax

Reduction Program, now established under the Conservation Land Act, which was passed by the Legislature in June.

We recently announced details of the tax reduction program which will provide for a property tax rebate of up to 100 per cent for landowners who protect conservation land specified under the act.

In last summer's budget the government announced amendments to the Managed Forest Tax Reduction Program, which also provides a tax rebate of 100 per cent of property taxes for the management of private forest lands. This parallels the Conservation Land Tax and Farm Tax Reduction programs.

The lands included under the Conservation Land Tax Reduction Program will encompass: Class 1, 2, and 3 wetlands, Areas of Natural and Scientific Interest, natural areas within the Niagara Escarpment, non-revenue-producing land owned by Conservation Authorities, and other land owned by non-profit organizations.

This tax reduction program will go a long way toward ensuring that these special areas are secured for the future.

As I have said, many of our initiatives in the securing of valuable wetlands are carried out in co-operation with other groups committed -- as we are -- to wetlands protection.

One of those groups is Wildlife Habitat Canada. We are actively pursuing a new agreement with this important conservation group to continue our co-operative efforts on wetlands. And as I mentioned a

few minutes ago, we have signed a new agreement with Ducks Unlimited. This agreement will have an impact on wetlands because wetlands provide habitat for many of Ontario's waterfowl.

I would like to review briefly some other initiatives in the area of protecting valuable natural sites:

International Recognition

Three major wildlife areas in Ontario, comprising almost 2.5-million hectares, received international recognition as protected wetlands and waterfowl habitat in 1987.

The three areas -- Polar Bear Provincial Park on Hudson Bay, Point Pelee National Park on Lake Erie and an area containing the Hannah Bay and Moose River Migratory Bird Sanctuaries on southern James Bay -- have been designated under the Convention on Wetlands of International Importance, known as the Ramsar Convention.

Forty-five countries, including Canada, are signatories to the Ramsar Convention, which identifies wetlands in an effort to preserve their unique ecological character.

Wainfleet Bog

A coalition of my ministry, Ducks Unlimited and Wildlife Habitat Canada was able to purchase about 20 per cent of the Wainfleet bog, one of the most notable wetlands in the Niagara Peninsula, in April of this year.

The purchase of 207 hectares from the Erie Peat Company cost \$323,000. The purchase secures an area of the bog which is

virtually untouched, and ensures that it will be maintained as a valuable wildlife habitat.

The bog contains a host of significant plant and animal species and was designated as an Area of Natural and Scientific Interest in 1983. It is home to four important species of butterflies and moths, 42 species of plants, 22 species of reptiles and amphibians, 16 species of birds, and 13 species of mammals.

The ministry will now proceed to develop a management plan for the bog, with the help of the public and the scientific community.

Carolinian Canada

In 1987, I signed a memorandum of understanding with the Minister of Culture and Communications to launch a \$3.6-million, three-year program to protect the unique natural habitat of the Carolinian vegetative zone in southwestern and southcentral Ontario.

This memorandum formalized a commitment by the Ontario government to contribute \$1.8-million to protection of valuable sites in the Carolinian area, matching an equal contribution from three national conservation organizations: the World Wildlife Fund, the Nature Conservancy of Canada and Wildlife Habitat Canada.

The provincial funding is administered by the Ontario Heritage Foundation.

The Carolinian zone lies south of a line running from Grand Bend to Toronto, extending

along the north shore of Lake Erie from the Detroit River to the Niagara River.

The Carolinian Canada program is aimed at conserving 36 critical natural areas, through private stewardship and land acquisition.

Backus Woods Trust

One of the best known and most valued sites in the Carolinian zone has its own separate but complementary program to Carolinian Canada. It is called the Backus Woods Trust Fund.

The Backus Woods, located south of Simcoe, is regarded as the most significant remnant of Carolinian forest remaining in Canada. It has been owned by the Long Point Region Conservation Authority since the 1950s.

The trust fund is administered by the Ontario Heritage Foundation in co-operation with my ministry and the Conservation Authority.

An agreement for protection of the area was developed by a group called the Backus Group, made up of representatives of the provincial government, scientists, naturalists and the Conservation Authority.

Last April, I announced that the ministry would make a \$25,000 contribution to the trust to implement a management plan for the forest.

The Ontario Heritage Foundation has undertaken to raise \$150,000 for the trust, which will be used to pay the costs of managing the area, visitor services, education programs, research and maintenance.

There are a number of other

interesting projects in this area, but I will forego the temptation to list them all.

Efficiency

One thing which I never lose sight of as a politician is the fact that the money I am spending comes out of the pockets of the taxpayers. Some of those taxpayers are my neighbors, and I know how hard they work to earn a living -- like most Ontarians.

That is why my ministry has been putting increased emphasis on administrative streamlining and efficiency in all programs.

We are always on the look-out for legitimate cost savings without sacrificing the need for management control and accountability.

My ministry and the Government of Ontario are committed to opening up as many opportunities as possible for the private sector to do business with the province.

I have already given an example, earlier in my remarks, of our new system of competitive bidding for private nurseries growing seedlings for our forest regeneration programs.

In cases where we are asking for private tenders, we are actively encouraging former seasonal employees of MNR to bid on new government service contracts. And we are also asking successful bidders to hire former MNR seasonal employees whenever possible.

But many of the areas in which we are effecting efficiencies are not in the public eye, and must take into account the fact that MNR is a large,

decentralized ministry. They include such areas as:

- o consolidation of warehouse space;
- o increased utilization of computer inventories to keep better track of supplies and parts;
- o consolidation of financial and administrative functions at Main Office;
- o improved management of our fleet of vehicles;
- o cheaper and more efficient communications linkages across the province;
- o better forecasting of purchasing requirements;
- o reduced red tape in internal requisitioning of supplies.

There is another major way in which we are getting value for money. We are putting more effort into human resources management.

We are giving our staff more opportunities for training and upgrading their skills.

We are concentrating more on staff planning so that we have the right people in the right positions at the right time.

We are working harder at internal communications to let our people know what is expected of them and why.

We are improving our performance management systems.

We are promoting employment equity.

We recognize that our people are the key to the success of everything we do. And we want them to know it.

Before finishing this section I have to say I especially appreciate the efforts of my staff in the past year.

They dealt professionally with issues like Temagami and the proposed James Auld Waterway. They have adjusted to a whole new approach to managing Crown land in order to encourage opportunities for economic development. They have adopted a more open style of government, they've learned to deal more closely with the public and accommodate doing business in a different way. My ministry's forestry staff adjusted well to a major personal upheaval. They left behind familiar surroundings here in Toronto and relocated to Sault Ste. Marie.

Many on the Class Environmental Assessment on Timber Management are away from home and their families for extended periods of time. Ministry of Natural Resources staff are doing a tremendous job and I want to express publicly my personal vote of confidence in their efforts.

Education

Mr. Chairman, my concluding remarks will be on the subject of education. I could have put education under any and all of the other resource program areas.

MNR promotes wildlife education through Project WILD, a program which gives elementary school children information about wildlife and habitat. Since late 1985, more than 10,000 Ontario teachers and 320 workshop leaders have been trained through Project WILD to conduct workshops for elementary school teachers throughout the province. The workshop leaders consist of two-member teams of MNR staff and school board consultants.

We have a forestry awareness

campaign to inform the general public about the value of Ontario's forest resources.

We have also developed materials on forest education for teachers of all grades of elementary and secondary schools.

The education materials are for a program called "Focus on Forests". The program consists of two resource manuals for teachers with lessons and activities on forest ecology, forest products, forest management and integrated use.

"Focus on Forests" is being tested now by 95 schools across the province. The preliminary response has been extremely positive.

The final version of the program will be available for the next school year.

We have initiated a new fisheries education program, aimed at teaching children the value of this resource and the need for wise management.

Education packages will be ready for distribution to Ontario schools in the 1989-90 school year. The funds for the program are coming from the Resident Sport Fishing Licence program.

I have already mentioned the success of our wildlife education program, Project WILD.

Our parks are filled with educational exhibits and interpretive displays. Our staff put on a myriad of "live" programs in the woods and by the water every summer.

Our Office of Recreational Boating promotes boating safety

training.

At the Leslie M. Frost Natural Resources Centre in Dorset, more than 11,000 students and adults participated in programs on natural resources, their management and use in 1987.

Mr. Chairman, as a society we have taken a long time to appreciate the harsh consequences of development that is not environmentally sound and resource use which is wasteful and indiscriminate.

There have always been individuals protesting the destruction of habitat or the loss of a species, but up until the last several years, they were mostly talking to themselves.

It is my view that the tide has turned, and that the vast majority of the public is on the side of wise use and management of the natural environment.

I think my ministry's balanced vision for the wise use of our resources is exactly the kind of approach that the majority of people support.

Whether the resources are found in the North or the South, the people of this province expect my ministry and our government to manage those resources well and for the benefit of everyone in the province, now and into the future.

Our balanced vision must be focused on a stunning range of natural resources, from the marshes of Point Pelee to the lowlands of Hudson Bay, from the prickly pear cactus to the polar bear, from Carolinian forests to boreal forests. This range makes my ministry extremely exciting because

everything we do has a profound effect on the resources and the people of this province.

We still have a lot of work to do. The Ministry of Natural Resources is involved -- in stream rehabilitation, wildlife reintroduction, fish stocking, wetlands protection, forest regeneration, creation of new parks ... and many more daily, ongoing programs.

At the same time, we must be passing on to our children and grandchildren the importance of the lessons we have learned about this delicately balanced ecosystem.

So that when they see a peregrine falcon in flight over the Niagara Peninsula;

or an Atlantic salmon leaping in Lake Ontario;

when they canoe through the peace of a wilderness park;

and camp on land held in trust for all the people of Ontario...

they will appreciate how hard some people worked to ensure they could enjoy such wonders. They will be determined to work just as hard to ensure they are never lost.

Thank you.

-30-

